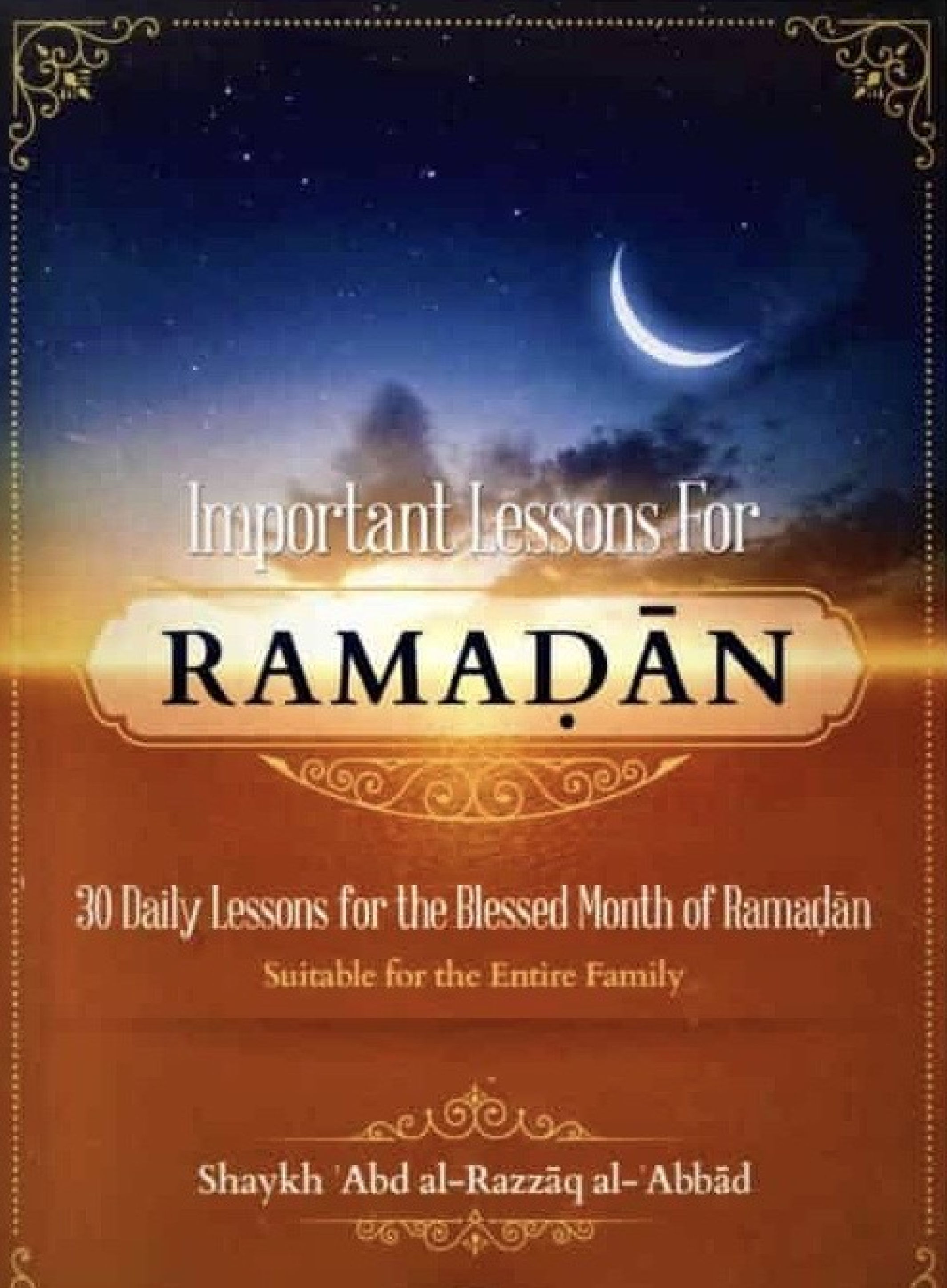

Important Lessons For
RAMAḌĀN
30 Daily Lessons for the Blessed Month of Ramaḍān
Suitable for the Entire Family
Shaykh 'Abd al-Razzāq al-'Abbād

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Transliteration Table

Consonants

ء	’	د	d	ض	ḍ	ك	k
ب	b	ذ	dh	ط	ṭ	ل	l
ت	t	ر	r	ظ	ẓ	م	m
ث	th	ز	z	ع	‘	ن	n
ج	j	س	s	غ	gh	ه	h
ح	ḥ	ش	sh	ف	f	و	w
خ	kh	ص	ṣ	ق	q	ي	y

Vowels

Short	ـَ	a	ـِ	i	ـُ	u
Long	ـَا	ā	ـِي	ī	ـُو	ū

Diphthongs	ـَوْ	aw	ـَيْ	ay

عَزَّوَجَلَّ	The Mighty and Majestic.
سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ	The Sublime and Exalted.
صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ	May Allāh make good mention of His Prophet in the highest company and grant him safety in this life and the next.
رَضِيَ ٱللَّٰهُ عَنْهُ	May Allāh be pleased with him.
رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّٰهُ	May Allāh show mercy to him.
عَلَيْهِ ٱلسَّلَامُ	Peace be upon him.

Publisher's Foreword

All praise and thanks belong to Allāh, and may the peace and blessings be upon the noblest of Prophets and Messengers, our Prophet Muḥammad, his family and all of his companions.

To proceed:

This treatise comprises of thirty daily lessons for the blessed month of Ramaḍān. It is filled with reminders, encouragements, and admonitions that will no doubt add fulfilment to the day of the fasting person.

These lessons have been compiled from a series of articles present on the Shaykh's website entitled Ramaḍān articles.

It has been written in a way that opens the eyes of the heedless and soothes the soul of the righteous. In this treatise, you will find chapters like:

- The importance of the remembrance of Allāh
- The significance of the prayer in Ramaḍān
- Points of reflection on the Day of Eid
- Ramaḍān the month of repentance
- And many more

These chapters are easily read and effortlessly understood by the entire family, making it a must for any Islamic Library. I ask Allāh to bestow His blessings upon the author, the translator and all others involved in this great effort, and to make it weighty on their scale of good deeds.

Lesson 1
Welcoming the Month of Ramaḍān

Verily, from the great blessings of Allāh upon His servants is that He has given them numerous seasons to perform acts of worship in which there are many acts of obedience, offences are cancelled, sins and evil deeds are forgiven, good deeds are multiplied, mercy descends, and magnificent gifts are granted.

Indeed, from the best of these seasons and most noble with Allāh is the blessed month of Ramaḍān.

Allāh, the Most High, said:

﴿ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أُنزِلَ فِيهِ ٱلْقُرْءَانُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ
وَبَيِّنَٰتٍ مِّنَ ٱلْهُدَىٰ وَٱلْفُرْقَانِ ﴾

> "The month of Ramaḍān in which was revealed the Qur'ān, a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance and the criterion (between right and wrong)."
> [al-Baqarah: 185]

How noble of a month this is and how great of a season!

A month of good and blessings, a month of fasting and prayer, a month of mercy, forgiveness and emancipation from the Fire. A month of generosity, kindness, giving, spending, doing good and benevolence.

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) would give glad tidings to his companions of the arrival of this great month. He would encourage them to exert themselves with righteous deeds from the obligations and the supererogatory acts, such as prayer, charity, showing goodness and benevolence, patience upon the obedience of Allāh, filling one's day with the fast and night with prayer, and occupying one's blessed time with remembrance, thanks, glorification of Allāh, saying *Lā Ilāha Illa Allāh* [none has the right to be worshipped except Allāh] and reciting the Qur'ān.

Imām Aḥmad collected in his *Musnad* [a *ḥadīth*] narrated by Anas b. Mālik (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

> "This is Ramaḍān. It has surely arrived. In it the gates of Paradise are opened, the gates of the Fire are closed and the devils are chained."[1]

Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah collected [a *ḥadīth*] narrated by Abu Hurairah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

> إِذَا كَانَ أَوَّلُ لَيْلَةٍ مِنْ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ صُفِّدَتِ الشَّيَاطِينُ وَمَرَدَةُ الْجِنِّ، وَغُلِّقَتْ أَبْوَابُ النَّارِ فَلَمْ يُفْتَحْ مِنْهَا بَابٌ، ثُمَّ فُتِحَتْ أَبْوَابُ الْجِنَانِ فَلَمْ يُغْلَقْ مِنْهَا بَابٌ، وَيُنَادِي مُنَادٍ: يَا بَاغِيَ الْخَيْرِ أَقْبِلْ، وَيَا بَاغِيَ الشَّرِّ أَقْصِرْ، وَلِلَّهِ عُتَقَاءُ مِنَ النَّارِ، وَذَلِكَ فِي كُلِّ لَيْلَةٍ

[1] *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad (no. 13408). It was declared *Saḥīḥ* by those who verified the *aḥādīth* of *al-Musnad*.

"On the first night of the month of Ramaḍān, the devils and the rebellious Jinn are shackled, the gates of the Fire are closed and not a gate remains open, and the gates of Paradise are opened and not a gate remains closed. A caller calls out, 'O seeker of good, come forth. O seeker of evil, halt.' Allāh emancipates a people from the Fire, and this is every night."[1]

Aḥmad collected [a *ḥadīth*] narrated by Abu Hurairah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ):

قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ، شَهْرٌ مُبَارَكٌ افْتَرَضَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ صِيَامَهُ، تُفْتَحُ فِيهِ أَبْوَابُ الْجَنَّةِ، وَيُغْلَقُ فِيهِ أَبْوَابُ الْجَحِيمِ، وَتُغَلُّ فِيهِ الشَّيَاطِينُ، فِيهِ لَيْلَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ، مَنْ حُرِمَ خَيْرَهَا فَقَدْ حُرِمَ

"Ramaḍān has come to you, a blessed month, which Allāh has obligated you to fast. In it the gates of Heaven are opened, the gates of Hell are closed, and the devils are chained. There is a night in it which is better than a thousand months. Whoever is deprived of its goodness is indeed deprived."[2]

The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) described Ramaḍān as being a blessed month. It truly is a blessed month; every moment of this month is distinguished with blessings: blessings in the time, blessings in the actions, and blessings in the reward and recompense. In it lies the night of Divine Decree, which is superior to one thousand months.

[1] Collected by al-Tirmidhī (no. 682) and Ibn Mājah (no. 1642). The wording here is that mentioned by al-Tirmidhī.

[2] Collected by Aḥmad (no. 9497).

Additionally, from the blessings of this month is that the good deeds are multiplied, the gates of Paradise are opened, the gates of the Fire are closed, the devils and the rebellious Jinn are shackled and Allāh liberates many people from the Fire.

It is established in the two authentic collections [in the *ḥadīth*] narrated by Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ، وَمَنْ قَامَ لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ

> "Whoever fasts the month of Ramaḍān, truthfully out of sincere faith and hoping to attain Allāh's reward, all of his past sins will be forgiven; and whoever stands in prayer on the night of Divine Decree, truthfully out of sincere faith and hoping to attain Allāh's reward, all of his past sins will be forgiven."[1]

And He said (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ):

> "Whoever stands in prayer in the month of Ramaḍān, truthfully out of sincere faith and hoping to attain Allāh's reward, all of his past sins will be forgiven."[2]

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[1] Collected by Bukhārī (no. 2014) and Muslim (no. 760).

[2] Collected by Bukhārī (no. 37) and Muslim (no. 759).

Considering this, surely the greatest loss and deprivation is for a person to reach this noble, blessed month – the month of forgiveness – and he is not forgiven for his sins, nor is the burden of his evil deeds lifted from him due to his great negligence, him not repenting and him abstaining from turning to Allāh with penitence, repentance, submission, humility and seeking forgiveness at these excellent times and virtuous days.

Rather, he enters this noble month and he leaves it while he remains upon his sins, persisting upon his evil deeds and reckless in his transgressions.

Ṭabarānī related in his *Muʿjam* [a *ḥadīth*] narrated by Jābir b. Samurah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

أَتَانِي جِبْرِيلُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فَقَالَ: يَا مُحَمَّدُ مَنْ أَدْرَكَ أَحَدَ وَالِدَيْهِ فَمَاتَ، فَدَخَلَ النَّارَ فَأَبْعَدَهُ اللَّهُ، فَقُلْ: آمِينَ. قُلْتُ: آمِينَ ". قَالَ:" يَا مُحَمَّدُ، مَنْ أَدْرَكَ شَهْرَ رَمَضَانَ فَمَاتَ، فَلَمْ يُغْفَرْ لَهُ فَأُدْخِلَ النَّارَ فَأَبْعَدَهُ اللَّهُ، قُلْ: آمِينَ فَقُلْتُ: آمِينَ ". قَالَ:" وَمَنْ ذُكِرْتَ عِنْدَهُ فَلَمْ يُصَلِّ عَلَيْكَ، فَمَاتَ فَدَخَلَ النَّارَ فَأَبْعَدَهُ اللَّهُ. قُلْ: آمِينَ فَقُلْتُ: آمِينَ."

"Jibrīl (peace be upon him) came to me and said, 'O Muḥammad! Whoever lives to see one of his parents (become old), and he dies and goes to the Fire, may Allāh distance him! Say, '*Amīn*.' So I said, '*Amīn*.' He said, 'O Muḥammad! Whoever reaches the month of Ramaḍān, then dies and is not forgiven and is made to enter the Fire, then may Allāh distance him! Say,

> '*Amīn*." So I said: '*Amīn*.' He said, 'Whoever you have been mentioned in his presence and he does not send *Ṣalāh* upon you, and then he dies and goes to the Fire, then may Allāh distance him! Say, '*Amīn*." So I said: '*Amīn*.'"[1]

Al-Tirmidhī related [a *ḥadīth*] from Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) from the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) that he said:

رَغِمَ أَنْفُ رَجُلٍ ذُكِرْتُ عِنْدَهُ فَلَمْ يُصَلِّ عَلَيَّ، وَرَغِمَ أَنْفُ رَجُلٍ دَخَلَ عَلَيْهِ رَمَضَانُ ثُمَّ انْسَلَخَ قَبْلَ أَنْ يُغْفَرَ لَهُ، وَرَغِمَ أَنْفُ رَجُلٍ أَدْرَكَ عِنْدَهُ أَبَوَاهُ الْكِبَرَ فَلَمْ يُدْخِلَاهُ الْجَنَّةَ

> "May the man in whose presence I am mentioned and he does not send *Ṣalāh* upon me be humiliated, may the man whom Ramaḍān has reached and then it departs before he is forgiven be humiliated, and may the man whose parents reach old age in his presence and they were not a cause for him to enter Paradise be humiliated."

Verily, Ramaḍān is a month of profit and gain. The Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) would strive more in Ramaḍān than he would strive in other than it. Similarly, the *Salaf* [Rightly Guided Predecessors] would – may Allāh be pleased with them and bestow upon them His Mercy – show the utmost concern for this month; they would devote themselves to drawing closer to Allāh with righteous deeds and they would exert themselves in praying its night prayer and filling their time with obedience.

[1] *Al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr of al-Ṭabarānī* (no. 2022).

Al-Zuhrī (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) stated:

> "When the month of Ramaḍān arrives, it is only [a time for] the recitation of the Qur'ān and feeding others."

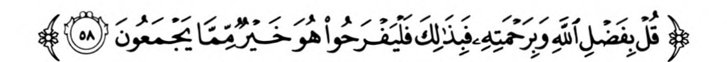
This was the importance placed on Ramaḍān by the Salaf: effort, endeavor, fasting, praying the night prayer, worship, recitation of the Qur'ān, saying *Lā Ilāha Illa Allāh*, glorification of Allāh, righteousness, benevolence, compassion, charity and feeding [others].

Ramaḍān is an esteemed guest and a noble visitor to the Muslims. Therefore, it is befitting for them to welcome it appropriately with the friendly reception and hospitality that it deserves.

If a distinguished guest was to arrive, then the individual would be delighted at his arrival and happy with his visit, and he would extend everything precious and valuable. The month of Ramaḍān is the most distinguished, honorable, pure, and complete guest, so let us be delighted with its arrival and that Allāh has allowed us to reach it.

How many a relative, companion and neighbor witnessed the previous Ramaḍān along with us, but were overtaken by death and they did not reach this month again. Thus, we should thank Allāh for blessing us to reach this month, and this is done through utilizing its blessed time in that which brings us closer to Allāh from beneficial acts of obedience, pious deeds, sincere repentance and benevolence.

Allāh, the Most High, said:



> "Say: 'In the Bounty of Allāh, and in His Mercy (i.e. Islam and the Qur'ān), therein let them rejoice.' That is better than what (the wealth) they amass." [Yunus: 58]

The month of Ramaḍān is one of the foundations, fundamentals and great pillars of Islām. In this month Allāh bestowed His Mercy upon His servants by revealing the Qur'ān.

So it is upon us to be delighted with this month, to thank Allāh and to seize its opportunities with that which Allāh has legislated and willed, such as occupying the day with its fast, competing in all avenues of good and filling its night with prayer, recitation of the Qur'ān, remembrance, righteousness and benevolence.

O Allāh, grant us success to obey You, and aid us to remember You, thank You and worship You correctly; and make easy for us the performance of righteous deeds, and bless us by allowing us to fulfill the rights of this esteemed guest; and aid us to fast, pray and observe good conduct this month, O Lord of the whole of the creation.

Lesson 2
The Month of Ramaḍān Is a Great Blessing

Allāh has blessed His servants with many blessings, which cannot be counted nor calculated.

﴿وَإِن تَعُدُّوا۟ نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَآ﴾

> "And if you count the Blessings of Allāh, never will you be able to count them." [Ibrāhīm: 34]

There are absolute blessings and restricted blessings; there are worldly blessings and religious blessings. He directs His servants and guides them to these blessings, and He calls them to the abode of peace:

﴿وَٱللَّهُ يَدْعُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ دَارِ ٱلسَّلَـٰمِ وَيَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٢٥﴾﴾

> "Allāh calls to the home of peace and guides whom He wills to a Straight Path." [Yūnus: 25]

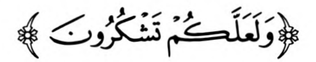
He granted them well-being in their intellects and bodies, He has provided them with pure, beneficial things and He has subjected to them whatever is on earth and whatever is in the Heavens.

All of these blessings have been bestowed upon the servants so that they show Him thanks and worship Him, alone without

any partners, so that they attain His Pleasure and successfully acquire His Favors and Mercies.

Verily, from His great gifts and splendid blessings upon His believing servants is that He legislated for them the fast of the blessed month of Ramaḍān, and He made this one of the great pillars of the religion and foundations that it is built upon.

Due to the fact that fasting the month of Ramaḍān is from the magnificent blessings that Allāh bestowed upon His servants, He closed the verses in which He ordered them to fast with His Saying:



"So that you may be grateful to Him."

This is because thankfulness [to Him] is the reason why He created the creation and graced them with a variety of blessings.

"The essence of gratitude and its reality is to recognize the blessings of The Bestower by way of submission, humility and love.

Therefore, the one who is unaware of the blessing, rather he is oblivious of it, has not shown thanks. The one who recognizes the blessing yet does not know The Bestower has not shown thanks. The one who recognizes the blessings and The Bestower but denies it is just like the one who denies the

blessing of The Bestower upon him, and has surely rejected it and been ungrateful.

The one who recognizes the blessing, knows The Bestower, acknowledges it, and does not deny it, but he does not submit to Him nor love Him nor is he pleased with Him has also not shown thanks. The one who acknowledges the blessing, knows the bestower, submits to Him, loves Him, is pleased with Him, and utilizes these blessings in His obedience and for things He loves, then he is truly thankful for them."[1]

With this, it becomes clear that gratitude "is built upon five principles: submission of the one showing thanks to the one whom he is thanking, love of Him, acknowledgement of His blessings, praise of Him on account of them and to not utilize them in that which He loathes."

These five principles are the foundation of gratitude and that which it is built upon. If any of them are absent, then one of the pillars of gratitude are missing. Anyone who has spoken concerning gratitude and defined it, then their speech returns to these principles and revolves around them."[2]

The people's actualization of gratitude varies greatly because of their diverse levels of knowledge concerning that which necessitates it and [their varying levels of] knowledge of The Magnificent Creator, Great Lord and Generous Bestower of blessings. Some of them know Allāh with a precise understanding of His names, attributes, actions, amazing

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[1] *Ṭāriq al-Hijratayn* of Ibn al-Qayyim (no. 175).

[2] *Madārij al-Sālikīn* of Ibn al-Qayyim (2/244).

creation and designs, and beautiful signs and gifts, thus his heart is full of love for Him, his tongue extols Him fervently and his limbs yield to Him by performing what pleases Him. He acknowledges all of the blessings which He has bestowed upon him and he uses them for things which He loves and is pleased with.

Some of them contaminate their soul with ignorance and heedlessness of Allāh, and they become further from Allāh due to their denial and rejection of Him, or they acknowledge Him but lack submission to His command and servility to His legislation.

Hence, the month of Ramaḍān is a divine favor and heavenly gift for His servants, so that those who believe can increase in faith, and those who fall short and are negligent can repent.

Allāh has distinguished this month from the other months with unique virtues, and He has singled it out with specific merits. Let us pause for a moment to highlight some of them, so that we can comprehend the greatness of this blessing that Allāh has given us, in order to thank Him as He deserves to be thanked and worship Him as He deserves to be worshipped.

- Verily, the noble month of Ramaḍān – the month of fasting – has a particular relationship with the Qur'ān, as it is the month in which the noble Qur'ān was revealed to mankind as a guidance.

He, the Most High, said:

﴿شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أُنزِلَ فِيهِ ٱلْقُرْءَانُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَٰتٍ مِّنَ ٱلْهُدَىٰ وَٱلْفُرْقَانِ ۚ﴾

"The month of Ramadan in which was revealed the Qur'ān, a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance and the criterion (between right and wrong)."
[al-Baqarah: 185]

Allāh praised in this noble verse the month of fasting, from among all the other months of the year, by mentioning that He selected it to reveal the magnificent Qur'ān.

There is actually a *ḥadīth* which mentions that all the divine Books were revealed to the Prophets in this month. There comes in the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad and *al-Mu'jam* of Ṭabarānī a *ḥadīth* narrated by Wāthilah b. al-Asqa' that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

أُنْزِلَتْ صُحُفُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام فِي أَوَّلِ لَيْلَةٍ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ، وَأُنْزِلَتْ التَّوْرَاةُ لِسِتٍّ مَضَيْنَ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ، وَالْإِنْجِيلُ لِثَلَاثَ عَشْرَةَ خَلَتْ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ، وَأُنْزِلَ الْفُرْقَانُ لِأَرْبَعٍ وَعِشْرِينَ خَلَتْ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ

"The Scriptures of Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him) were revealed on the first night of Ramaḍān, the Torah was revealed on the sixth of Ramaḍān, the *Injīl* was revealed on the 13th of Ramaḍān, and the Criterion [Qur'ān] was revealed on the 24th of Ramaḍān."[1]

[1] *Musnad* (no. 16921: [4/107]) and Ṭabarānī (no. 17646). The wording is that related by Imām Aḥmad.

This *ḥadīth* shows that the month of Ramaḍān was the month in which the divine Books were revealed to the Messengers (may Allāh be pleased with them). The Books were revealed to the Prophets all at once, whereas the Qur'ān, due to its additional nobility and great excellence, was revealed on the Night of Divine Decree in the blessed month of Ramaḍān at one time to *Bayt al-'Izzah*, which is in the lowest Heaven, as Allāh said:

﴿إِنَّآ أَنزَلۡنَٰهُ فِي لَيۡلَةِ ٱلۡقَدۡرِ ١﴾

"Verily, We have sent it down in the Night of Al-Qadr." [Al-Qadr: 1]

And He Said:

﴿إِنَّآ أَنزَلۡنَٰهُ فِي لَيۡلَةٖ مُّبَٰرَكَةٍۚ إِنَّا كُنَّا مُنذِرِينَ ٣﴾

"Indeed, We sent it down during a blessed night. Indeed, We were to warn [mankind]." [Al-Dukhān: 3]. Then it came down in parts over the months and days in succession to the Messenger of Allāh.

In this lies an indication of the lofty station of this month – the blessed month of Ramaḍān – and that it has a particular relationship with the noble Qur'ān, as during this month Allāh bestowed upon this nation this great grace: The descent of His

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[TN] Shaykh Albānī declared this *ḥadīth* to be sound [*Ḥasan*] in *al-Ṣaḥīḥah* (no. 1575).

revelation and His noble Speech which comprises of guidance [for mankind]:

﴿هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَٰتٍ مِّنَ ٱلْهُدَىٰ وَٱلْفُرْقَانِ﴾

"A guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance and the criterion (between right and wrong)." [al-Baqarah: 185]

A guidance to all religious and worldly benefits. It comprises of a clarification of the truth with the clearest explanation, and a criterion between guidance and misguidance, truth and falsehood and darkness and light.

- Furthermore, within the month of Ramaḍān is the Night of Divine Decree about which Allāh said:

﴿وَمَآ أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ ٱلْقَدْرِ ۝٢ لَيْلَةُ ٱلْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ ۝٣﴾

"And what will make you know what the Night of *Al-Qadr* is. The Night of *Al-Qadr* is better than a thousand months." [Al-Qadr: 2-3]

This means that the actions in this month are superior to the actions of a thousand months and likewise the reward.

- Fasting this month is a reason for the forgiveness of sins. The two Shaykhs [Bukhārī and Muslim] related a *ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) that the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ

"Whoever fasts the month of Ramaḍān, truthfully out of sincere faith and hoping to attain Allāh's reward, all of his past sins will be forgiven."[1]

This means that he believes in Allāh, he is pleased that fasting is obligatory upon him, he awaits its recompense and reward and has no doubt concerning this, then Allāh will forgive his previous sins.

There comes in *Ṣaḥīḥ* Muslim a *ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) that the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

"The five daily prayers, *Jum'ah* to *Jum'ah*, and Ramaḍān to Ramaḍān are an expiation for what is between them, as long as the major sins are avoided."[2]

- In addition to what has previously been mentioned, the one who prays the night prayer during Ramaḍān, truthfully out of sincere faith and hoping to attain Allāh's reward, all of his past sins will be forgiven, the devils are shackled, the gates of Paradise are opened, the gates of the Fire are locked, and Allāh liberates a people from the Fire and this occurs each night.

- In this blessed month Allāh gave victory to the Muslims over their enemies, the polytheists, during the major battle

[1] Agreed upon. Bukhārī (no. 2014) and Muslim (no. 760).

[2] Muslim (no. 233).

of Badr. The number of polytheists in this encounter were three times that of the Muslims.

In this blessed month, Allāh decreed the conquest of the honored, secure city of Mecca at the hands of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), and he purified it of idols. The number of idols in and around the *Ka'bah* was three hundred and sixty. The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) destroyed these idols, saying:

﴿ وَقُلْ جَآءَ ٱلْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ ٱلْبَٰطِلُ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلْبَٰطِلَ كَانَ زَهُوقًا ﴿٨١﴾ ﴾

"And say: 'Truth has come and falsehood has vanished. Surely! Falsehood is ever bound to vanish.'" [Al-Isrā: 81]

This is the month of effort, striving and actions. This the month of worship and struggling for the sake of Allāh. Thus, a month with this virtue and in which Allāh shows His servants this kindness is deserving to be held in high esteem by the servants and be a season for their worship and a provision for their Hereafter.

O Allāh, make us from those who know the station and sanctity of this month, and grant us success to execute what is pleasing to You in it. Verily, You answer the supplications.

O Allāh, grant us success to obey You, and aid us to remember You, thank You and worship You correctly; and make easy for us the performance of righteous deeds, and bless us by allowing us to fulfil the rights of this esteemed

guest; and aid us to fast, pray and observe good conduct this month; O Lord of the whole of creation.

Lesson 3
The Excellence of the Fast

Verily, fasting is from the most virtuous of worship and best acts of obedience. Its virtue and lofty station has been mentioned in numerous texts.

From the virtues of fasting is that Allāh has prescribed it for all nations and made it compulsory upon them:

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ كُتِبَ عَلَيۡكُمُ ٱلصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِكُمۡ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تَتَّقُونَ ١٨٣ ﴾

> "O you who believe, fasting has been prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become pious." [Al-Baqarah: 183]

If fasting was not a magnificent act of worship, which is indispensable to the creation as an act of servitude to Allāh, then Allāh would not have made it obligatory upon all nations.

The desired goal of fasting is the attainment of piety, which Allāh has instructed and commanded all the nations with:

﴿ وَلَقَدۡ وَصَّيۡنَا ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُواْ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ مِن قَبۡلِكُمۡ وَإِيَّاكُمۡ أَنِ ٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَۚ ﴾

> "And We have instructed those who were given the scriptures before you and yourselves to fear Allāh."
> [Al-Nisā: 131]

From the virtues of fasting is that its reward is not fixed to a specific amount; rather, the fasting person is given an unlimited reward.

The two Shaykhs [Bukhārī and Muslim] collected in their authentic collections [a *ḥadīth*] narrated by Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ) that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ) said:

> "Allāh said, 'All of the deeds of the son of Adam are for himself except fasting which is for Me, and I will reward it.' Fasting is a shield. If one of you is fasting he should avoid sexual relations and quarrelling. If anyone insults or fights him, then let him say, 'I am fasting.' By Him in Whose Hand my soul is, the smell coming from the mouth of the fasting person is better before Allāh than the smell of musk. There are two pleasures for the fasting person which he experiences: one at the time of breaking the fast, and the other when he meets his Lord. He will be delighted because of his fast."[1]

In the narration collected by Muslim:

> "All of the deeds of the son of Adam are multiplied by ten all the way up to seven hundred times. Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic, said, 'Except fasting, verily it is for Me, and I will reward for it. He forsakes his lusts [desires] and his food for My sake.'"[2]

[1] Agreed upon. Bukhari (no. 1904) and Muslim (no. 1150).

[2] Muslim (no.1150).

This amazing *ḥadīth* shows the excellence of fasting from many different angles, which have been elaborated upon by al-'Allāmah, Shaykh Muḥammad b. Ṣāliḥ al-'Uthaymīn (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ):

1. That Allāh singled out fasting for Himself from all the other actions, and this is because of its elevated place with Him, His love of it and the manifestation of sincerity to Him alone through this deed. This is because it is a secret between the servant and his Lord, and no one has knowledge of it except Allāh.

   Verily, the fasting person can be alone in an uninhabited place and he is able to eat what Allāh has forbidden him from due to the fast, and he does not eat because he knows that he has a Lord Who sees him when alone. Allāh has forbidden him from this and he abandons it, fearing His punishment and desiring His reward. Due to this, Allāh rewards him for his sincerity, and He specifically singles out his fast for Himself from all of the other actions. This is why He said:

   > "He forsakes his food and his desires for My sake."

The benefit of Allāh singling out the fast in this way will be apparent on the Day of Judgment [Resurrection], as Sufyān b. "Uyainah (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

> "When Allāh brings His servant to account on the Day of Resurrection, the servant settles with his actions all of the charges of injustice against him, until the only thing remaining is the fast. So Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic, will take it upon Himself [to settle] the remaining

wrongs; and He will enter him into Paradise by way of the fast."

2. That Allāh said concerning the fast:

"I will reward it."

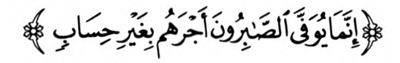
He ascribed the recompense to His Noble Self because the other righteous deeds are multiplied by a fixed number: a good deed is multiplied ten times to seven hundred times and many times more. As for fasting, then Allāh ascribed the reward to Himself without specification of a particular amount, and He is the Most Generous and the Most Beneficent. The value of a gift is determined by the one giving it. Thus, the reward for fasting is abundant and great, without any limit.

All of the types of patience are found in the fast:

i. Patience upon the obedience of Allāh.
ii. Patience in refraining from what Allāh has forbidden.
iii. Patience upon the distressing [conditions] decreed by Allāh, such as hunger, thirst, and weakness of the body and soul.

Therefore, these categories of patience exist in the fast, and the fasting person becomes from the patient.

And Allāh, the Most High, has said:



> "Only those who are patient shall receive their rewards in full without reckoning." [al-Zumar: 10]

3. Fasting is a shield, meaning it is a protection and barrier that shields the fasting person from vain speech and evil actions. That is why he said (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ):

> "If one of you is fasting, he should avoid sexual relations and quarrelling."

It also shields him from the Fire. Al-Imām Aḥmad collected in his *Musnad* [a *ḥadīth*] narrated by Jābir b. ʿAbdullah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) that the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

> "Fasting is a shield which the servant uses to protect himself from the Fire."[1]

4. The odor coming from the mouth of the fasting person is more pleasant to Allāh than musk, because it is from the effects of the fast, so it is pleasant to Allāh and loved by Him. This is a proof of the elevated status of the fast with Allāh, to the extent that something detested and vulgar to the people is loved and pleasant with Allāh, because it stems from obeying Him with the fast.

5. The fasting person experiences two moments of delight: a delightful moment when he breaks his fast and a delightful moment when he meets his Lord. As for the delightful moment when he breaks his fast, then he is delighted with what Allāh has blessed him with from the performance of the worship of fasting, which is from the best of righteous

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[1] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no.15200: [3/396])

deeds. How many people are deprived of this and did not fast! He is also delighted with what Allāh has allowed him from food, drink, and marital relations, which were forbidden during the fast.

As for his delight when he meets his Lord, then he is delighted with the fast when he attains its reward from Allāh, the Most High, full and complete. This is a time when he is in dire need of it: When it is said, "Where are those who fasted?" So they can enter Paradise through the gate of *al-Rayyān*, which no one can enter except them.

From the virtues of the fast is that it will intercede for the individual on the Day of Resurrection. Aḥmad, al-Ṭabarānī and al-Ḥākim, who said it is authentic and that it meets the conditions of Muslim, collected [a *ḥadīth*] narrated by ʿAbdullah b. ʿAmr that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

الصِّيَامُ وَالْقُرْآنُ يَشْفَعَانِ لِلْعَبْدِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ؛ يَقُولُ الصِّيَامُ أَيْ رَبِّ مَنَعْتُهُ الطَّعَامَ وَالشَّهَوَاتِ بِالنَّهَارِ فَشَفِّعْنِي فِيهِ، وَيَقُولُ الْقُرْآنُ مَنَعْتُهُ النَّوْمَ بِاللَّيْلِ فَشَفِّعْنِي فِيهِ، قَالَ فَيُشَفَّعَانِ

"Fasting and the Qur'ān will both intercede on behalf of the servant on the Day of Resurrection. The fast will say, 'O my Lord, I prevented him from his food and his desires during the day, so allow me to intercede for him.'

> And the Qur'ān will say, 'O my Lord, I prevented him from sleeping at night, so allow me to intercede for him.' So they will be granted permission to intercede."[1]

From the virtues of fasting is that there is a gate for those who observed the fast known as *al-Rayyān*, no one will enter it except those who used to fast. Bukhārī and Muslim collected [a *ḥadīth*] narrated by Sahl b. Sa'd that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

> "Verily, in Paradise there is a gate called *al-Rayyān*. Those who used to observe the fast will enter through it on the Day of Resurrection, none shall enter through it except them. It will be said, 'Where are those who used to fast?' They will get up, and none will enter through it except them."[2]

From the virtues of fasting is that if the servant performs it in the legislated manner and executes it- making sure that he is sincere to Allāh and following the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ) – then it will produce numerous ripe fruits such as firmness upon the truth, an increase in faith, strength of certainty, an endowment of beautiful manners and subjugation of his desires. It will result in actions of the heart like fear, hope, love and the like.

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[1] *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad (no. [2/174]) and *Mustadrak* of Ḥākim (1/740).

[2] Bukhari (no. 1896) and Muslim [1152]. The wording is collected by Bukhari.

Ibn al- Qayyim said:

> "The meaning of this is that due to the many benefits of fasting, which are perceived by the sound intellects and upright and intact innate states [*Fiṭrah*], Allāh legislated fasting for His servants as a mercy, act of benevolence, and a shield and protection for them."[1]

O Allāh, grant us success to attain that which You love and are pleased with, teach us what we are ignorant of, and benefit us through what you have taught us. [O Allāh], make us from those who possess knowledge of the virtues of the fast and those who implement what is required from them in this regard such as sincerity, perfection and completion of the fast in a manner pleasing to you.

[1] *Zād al- Ma'ād* (2/28).

Lesson 4
Al-Ṣiyām (Abstaining) from What Allāh Has Forbidden

Indeed, from the most important of things that those who observe the fast must adhere to and show great concern towards is the preservation of their fast from anything that will diminish its worth and take away from its reward.

Muslim related in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* that the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

إِنَّ الْمُفْلِسَ مِنْ أُمَّتِي يَأْتِي يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ بِصَلَاةٍ وَصِيَامٍ وَزَكَاةٍ وَيَأْتِي قَدْ شَتَمَ هَذَا وَقَذَفَ هَذَا وَأَكَلَ مَالَ هَذَا وَسَفَكَ دَمَ هَذَا وَضَرَبَ هَذَا ؛ فَيُعْطَى هَذَا مِنْ حَسَنَاتِهِ وَهَذَا مِنْ حَسَنَاتِهِ ، فَإِنْ فَنِيَتْ حَسَنَاتُهُ قَبْلَ أَنْ يُقْضَى مَا عَلَيْهِ أُخِذَ مِنْ خَطَايَاهُمْ فَطُرِحَتْ عَلَيْهِ ثُمَّ طُرِحَ فِي النَّارِ

> "The individual who is bankrupt from my nation will come on the Day of Judgment with prayer, fasting, and *Zakāh.* Surely he has abused this one, accused this one of fornication, consumed the wealth of this one, shed the blood of this one and beaten this one. This person will be given from his good deeds and another will be given from his good deeds. If all his good deeds are exhausted before he has settled [his wrongs], then their evil deeds will be taken from them and thrown upon him. Then he will be cast into the Fire."[1]

[1] Muslim (no. 2581).

Even though this servant performed the prayer, observed the fast and gave Zakāh – except he failed to attain its reward and lost its recompense due to the oppression and transgression committed by his limbs and the abuse and slander accumulated by his tongue – he is among the bankrupt.

For this reason, in order for the Muslim to benefit from his fast and reap the fruits of his tremendous acts of obedience, he must know that the obligation to refrain from food, drink and anything that breaks the fast is only in Ramaḍān, from the arrival of its *Fajr* till the setting of its sun. However, as for refraining from forbidden matters, then this is observed throughout the year, rather throughout one's life.

During the days of Ramaḍān the Muslim refrains (*Ṣawm*) from that which Allāh has permitted outside of this time, and he also refrains from what Allāh has forbidden. He refrains (*Ṣawm*) his whole life from what Allāh has forbidden.

This is because *Ṣawm* in the Arabic language is restraint and abstinence. Restraint and abstinence of the eye, the tongue, the ear, the hand, the foot and the private parts from that which they have been prohibited. This is *Ṣiyām* according to the Arabic language, and it is compulsory upon the individual throughout his life and for the entire period of his existence [in this world].

Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى), after bestowing upon the servants these great blessings – the eye, the tongue, the ear, the hand, the foot, the private parts and other than them – made it obligatory upon them to utilize them in that which pleases Him, and He forbade them from using them in that which angers Him.

Thanking Allāh correctly necessitates that these blessing be used in that which Allāh has commanded, to prevent and withhold them from what Allāh has forbidden and to refrain from falling into disobedience of the One who bestowed these blessing – and this is Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic.

The eye, for example, it is legislated to use it to look at that which Allāh has permitted, and it has been prohibited from looking at that which is forbidden, like looking at unrelated women and what is spread on many of the satellite channels and television stations from shameful dramas, immoral films, ignoble images and other than this. Therefore, refraining the eye from this is considered to be the *Ṣiyām* [fasting] of the eye. This ruling is continuous and permanent.

As for the ear, then it is legislated to use it in that which Allāh has commanded and permitted, and it has been forbidden to use it to listen to things which are impermissible, such as evil speech, improper talk, music, lying, backbiting or anything else that Allāh has forbidden. Therefore, refraining the ear from this is considered to be its *Ṣiyām* [fasting]. This ruling is continuous and permanent.

It has been legislated to use the hand in that which Allāh has commanded and for doing that which is lawful, and it has been forbidden from using it in that which Allāh has forbidden. Therefore, refraining the hand from this is considered to be its *Ṣiyām* [fasting]. This ruling is continuous and permanent.

Similarly, the private parts; it has been legislated to use them in that which is lawful, and they have been forbidden from that which is unlawful, such as fornication, homosexuality and other

than that. Therefore, refraining the private part from this is considered to be its *Ṣiyām* [fasting]. This ruling is continuous and permanent.

Allāh has promised a grand reward, a magnificent recompense and abundant good in this life and the Hereafter for those who show gratitude for these blessings and utilize them in that which is pleasing to Him. He has threatened with a punishment and severe torment those who do not preserve these blessings nor comply to the wisdom of their creation or their desired usage; rather, the individual carelessly uses them in that which angers Allāh.

He has informed us that these limbs will be questioned on the Day of Resurrection about their owner, and their owner will be questioned about them. He, the Most High, said:

﴿ وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلسَّمْعَ وَٱلْبَصَرَ وَٱلْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْـُٔولًا ﴿٣٦﴾ ﴾

> "And do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge. Indeed, the hearing, the sight and the heart - about all those [one] will be questioned." [Al-Isrā: 36]

He said:

﴿ ٱلْيَوْمَ نَخْتِمُ عَلَىٰٓ أَفْوَٰهِهِمْ وَتُكَلِّمُنَآ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَتَشْهَدُ أَرْجُلُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾ ﴾

> "This Day, We shall seal up their mouths, and their hands will speak to Us, and their legs will bear witness to what they used to earn." [Yā Sīn: 65]

He, the Mighty and Majestic, said:

﴿ وَيَوْمَ يُحْشَرُ أَعْدَآءُ ٱللَّهِ إِلَى ٱلنَّارِ فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا مَا جَآءُوهَا شَهِدَ عَلَيْهِمْ سَمْعُهُمْ وَأَبْصَٰرُهُمْ وَجُلُودُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَقَالُوا۟ لِجُلُودِهِمْ لِمَ شَهِدتُّمْ عَلَيْنَا ۖ قَالُوٓا۟ أَنطَقَنَا ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنطَقَ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ وَهُوَ خَلَقَكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ ﴾

> "And (remember) the Day that the enemies of Allāh will be gathered to the Fire, so they will be collected there (the first and the last). Till, when they reach it (Hell-fire), their hearing (ears) and their eyes, and their skins will testify against them as to what they used to do. And they will say to their skins, "Why have you testified against us?" They will say, "We were made to speak by Allāh, who has made everything speak; and He created you the first time, and to Him you are returned."

In a *ḥadīth* the Prophet (ﷺ) advised Muʿādh b. Jabal (رضي الله عنه) to safeguard his tongue, and Muʿādh said:

يَا نَبِيَّ اللَّهِ! وَإِنَّا لَمُؤَاخَذُونَ بِمَا نَتَكَلَّمُ بِهِ؟ فَقَالَ - صلى الله عليه وسلم - ثَكِلَتْكَ أُمُّكَ يَا مُعَاذُ وَهَلْ يَكُبُّ النَّاسَ فِي النَّارِ عَلَى وُجُوهِهِمْ أَوْ عَلَى مَنَاخِرِهِمْ إِلَّا حَصَائِدُ أَلْسِنَتِهِمْ

"O Prophet of Allāh, will we be held responsible for what we utter with it?" He said, "May your mother be bereft of you, O Mu'ādh! Will the people be thrown into Hell on their faces or on their noses for anything other than the harvest of their tongues?"[1]

He (صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ) said:

مَنْ يَضْمَنْ لِي مَا بَيْنَ لَحْيَيْهِ وَمَا بَيْنَ رِجْلَيْهِ أَضْمَنْ لَهُ الْجَنَّةَ

"Whoever can guarantee for me what is between his two jawbones [i.e. the tongue] and his two legs, then I guarantee for him Paradise."[2]

The above *ḥadīth* was also collected by al-Tirmidhī – who declared it *Ḥasan* [sound] – from Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ) with the wording:

مَنْ وَقَاهُ اللَّهُ شَرَّ مَا بَيْنَ لَحْيَيْهِ وَشَرَّ مَا بَيْنَ رِجْلَيْهِ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ

"Whoever Allāh protects from the evil of what is between his jawbones and the evil between his legs, will enter Paradise."[3]

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[11] Al-Tirmidhī (no. 2616) and Ibn Mājah (no. 3973). The wording is that mentioned by al-Tirmidhī.

[2] Al-Bukhārī (no. 6474).

[3] Al-Tirmidhī (no. 2409).

In the two authentic collections [Bukhārī and Muslim] there comes a *ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah who said that the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الآخِرِ فَلْيَقُلْ خَيْرًا أَوْ لِيَصْمُتْ

> "Whoever believes in Allāh and the Last Day, then let him speak good or remain silent."[1]

Additionally, in the two authentic collections [Bukhārī and Muslim] there comes a *ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Mūsá al-Ashʿarī (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said:

قَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَيُّ الْإِسْلَامِ أَفْضَلُ؟ قَالَ مَنْ سَلِمَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَيَدِهِ

> "They said, 'O Messenger of Allāh, which Islām is best?' He responded, 'The one whom the Muslims are safe from his tongue and hand.'"[2]

These texts – and those like them – establish that it is obligatory upon the servant to guard his tongue, private parts, hearing, sight, hand and foot from that which is forbidden. This is *Ṣiyām* linguistically [in the Arabic language]. This type of *Ṣiyām* is not specific to one time to the exception of another. Rather, it is obligatory to remain steadfast upon this until death, obeying Allāh to successfully attain His pleasure and reward, and to escape His wrath and punishment.

[1] Al-Bukhārī (no. 6135) and Muslim (no. 47).

[2] Al-Bukhārī (no. 11) and Muslim (no. 42).

Thus, if the Muslim understands that in the month of Ramaḍān he abstains from what Allāh has made lawful for him because Allāh has forbidden him from this during the days of the month of Ramaḍān, then let him also comprehend that Allāh has forbidden him from unlawful [*Ḥarām*] matters for the duration of his life and entire lifespan. So it is upon him to always refrain from what Allāh has forbidden, fearing the punishment of Allāh, which He has prepared for those who oppose His command and perpetrate what He has forbidden.

Whoever guards their tongue from filthy speech and false statements, their private parts from what Allāh has forbidden, their hand from engaging in what it is not permitted for it to engage in, their foot from walking towards anything except what is pleasing to Allāh, their hearing from what it is forbidden to listen to, their sight from what it is forbidden to look at – and they use their limbs in the obedience of Allāh and in that which is allowed, and they guard them and preserve them until Allāh takes their soul – then they will break their fast with what Allāh has prepared for those who obey Him from eternal bliss and magnificent bounty, which cannot be truly grasped nor elaborated upon.

Their first encounter with this will be that which the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) highlighted when he mentioned what occurs to the believer at the time he leaves this abode and begins his journey to the abode of the Hereafter. When the angels, who have faces like the sun, come to him during his latter moments in this world, carrying a shroud and embalmment from Paradise. At the head of them is the Angel of Death who says:

أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الطَّيِّبَةُ اخْرُجِي إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِنَ اللهِ وَرِضْوَانٍ ، فَتَخْرُجُ تَسِيلُ كَمَا تَسِيلُ الْقَطْرَةُ مِنْ فِي السِّقَاءِ فَيَأْخُذُهَا فَإِذَا أَخَذَهَا لَمْ يَدَعُوهَا فِي يَدِهِ طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ حَتَّى يَأْخُذُوهَا فَيَجْعَلُوهَا فِي ذَلِكَ الْكَفَنِ وَفِي ذَلِكَ الْحَنُوطِ وَيَخْرُجُ مِنْهَا كَأَطْيَبِ نَفْحَةِ مِسْكٍ وُجِدَتْ عَلَى وَجْهِ الْأَرْضِ ، قَالَ فَيَصْعَدُونَ بِهَا فَلَا يَمُرُّونَ يَعْنِي بِهَا عَلَى مَلَإٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ إِلَّا قَالُوا مَا هَذَا الرُّوحُ الطَّيِّبُ ؟! فَيَقُولُونَ فُلَانُ بْنُ فُلَانٍ بِأَحْسَنِ أَسْمَائِهِ الَّتِي كَانُوا يُسَمُّونَهُ بِهَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَتَّى يَنْتَهُوا بِهَا إِلَى السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا ، فَيَسْتَفْتِحُونَ لَهُ فَيُفْتَحُ لَهُمْ فَيُشَيِّعُهُ مِنْ كُلِّ سَمَاءٍ مُقَرَّبُوهَا إِلَى السَّمَاءِ الَّتِي تَلِيهَا حَتَّى يُنْتَهَى بِهِ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ السَّابِعَةِ ، فَيَقُولُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ اكْتُبُوا كِتَابَ عَبْدِي فِي عِلِّيِّينَ وَأَعِيدُوهُ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ فَإِنِّي مِنْهَا خَلَقْتُهُمْ وَفِيهَا أُعِيدُهُمْ وَمِنْهَا أُخْرِجُهُمْ تَارَةً أُخْرَى ، قَالَ فَتُعَادُ رُوحُهُ فِي جَسَدِهِ فَيَأْتِيهِ مَلَكَانِ فَيُجْلِسَانِهِ فَيَقُولَانِ لَهُ مَنْ رَبُّكَ ؟ فَيَقُولُ رَبِّيَ اللَّهُ، فَيَقُولَانِ لَهُ مَا دِينُكَ ؟ فَيَقُولُ دِينِيَ الْإِسْلَامُ، فَيَقُولَانِ لَهُ مَا هَذَا الرَّجُلُ الَّذِي بُعِثَ فِيكُمْ؟ فَيَقُولُ هُوَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَيَقُولَانِ لَهُ وَمَا عِلْمُكَ؟ فَيَقُولُ قَرَأْتُ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ فَآمَنْتُ بِهِ وَصَدَّقْتُ فَيُنَادِي مُنَادٍ فِي السَّمَاءِ: أَنْ صَدَقَ عَبْدِي فَأَفْرِشُوهُ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ وَأَلْبِسُوهُ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ وَافْتَحُوا لَهُ بَابًا إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ، قَالَ فَيَأْتِيهِ مِنْ رَوْحِهَا وَطِيبِهَا وَيُفْسَحُ لَهُ فِي قَبْرِهِ مَدَّ بَصَرِهِ، قَالَ وَيَأْتِيهِ رَجُلٌ حَسَنُ الْوَجْهِ حَسَنُ الثِّيَابِ طَيِّبُ الرِّيحِ فَيَقُولُ: أَبْشِرْ بِالَّذِي يَسُرُّكَ هَذَا يَوْمُكَ الَّذِي كُنْتَ تُوعَدُ، فَيَقُولُ لَهُ مَنْ أَنْتَ؟! فَوَجْهُكَ الْوَجْهُ يَجِيءُ بِالْخَيْرِ، فَيَقُولُ أَنَا عَمَلُكَ الصَّالِحُ، فَيَقُولُ رَبِّ أَقِمِ السَّاعَةَ حَتَّى أَرْجِعَ إِلَى أَهْلِي وَمَالِي

"'O you virtuous soul, come out to the forgiveness and pleasure of your Lord.' So it will come out as a drop

comes out of the mouth of a jug (with ease). Then he will take it.

When the angel of death seizes the soul, the angels do not leave it in his hand for longer than the blink of an eye until they have placed it in that shroud and that embalmment. And there will emanate from it a smell like that of the sweetest smelling musk on the face of the earth. Then they shall ascend with it, and they shall not pass with it by any group of angels but they will say, 'What is this good and sweet-smelling soul?' Then they shall say to them, '(He is) so and so, the son of so and so,' choosing the best of the names he used to be called in this life.

Until they reach the lowest heaven, then they shall ask permission to enter, and they shall be granted entry. It will be followed by the angels of each heaven to the next heaven, until they end at the seventh heaven. Then Allāh, the Exalted and Most High, shall say, "Write the book of my servant in *'Illīyīn*." Then it shall be said, 'Return them to the earth, for I have created them from it, into it I shall return them, and from it I shall extract (resurrect) them a second time.' So his soul is returned to his body.

Then two angels shall come and sit him up, and they shall ask him, 'Who is your Lord?' He shall reply, 'My Lord is Allāh.' Then they ask him, 'What is your religion?' He shall answer, 'My religion is Islām.' Then they ask him, 'Who is this man who was sent among you?' He will reply, 'He is the Messenger of Allāh.'

> Then they shall ask him, 'How did you acquire knowledge of this?' He shall reply, 'I read the Book of Allāh, then I believed in it and accepted it.'
>
> Then a caller will call from the heavens, 'My slave has spoken the truth, so spread out for him from the furnishings of Paradise, clothe him from Paradise, and open a door for him to the Paradise.' Its goodness and its smell will come to him, and his grave will be expanded for him, as far as he can see.
>
> Then a man will come to him. His face will be handsome, his clothes will be fine, and his smell will be sweet. He shall say to him, 'I bring you glad tidings of that which will make you happy. This is the day that you were promised.' He will respond to him, 'Who are you? For your face is the face of someone who comes with good news.' He shall reply, 'I am your good deeds.' Then he shall say, 'My Lord, bring the hour so that I might return to my family and my wealth.'"[1]

This is the reward for those who observe *Ṣiyām* [abstinence] from what Allāh has forbidden, adhere to the obedience of Allāh, preserve His commands and abandon His prohibitions.

May Allāh make us and you from among them, and may He guide us to traverse upon their path.

[1] Collected by Imām Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 18534).

Lesson 5
Soundness of the Heart and Tongue

Al-Ḥākim collected a *ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) that the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

لَيْسَ الصِّيَامَ مِنَ الْأَكْلِ وَالشُّرْبِ، إِنَّمَا الصِّيَامُ مِنَ اللَّغْوِ وَالرَّفَثِ، فَإِنْ سَابَّكَ أَحَدٌ، وَجَهِلَ عَلَيْكَ فَقُلْ: إِنِّي صَائِمٌ

"*Ṣiyām* [fasting] is not only from food and drink, but it is *Ṣiyām* [abstinence] from evil speech and actions. If anyone was to insult or aggravate you, then say, 'I am fasting.'"[1]

Al-Imām Aḥmad collected a *ḥadīth* narrated by Yazīd b. ʿAbdullah al-Shikhkhīr who stated that a Bedouin said that he heard the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) say:

صَوْمُ شَهْرِ الصَّبْرِ وَثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ مِنْ كُلِّ شَهْرٍ يُذْهِبْنَ وَحَرَ الصَّدْرِ

"Fasting the month of patience and three days from every month eradicates the malice of the heart."[2]

Verily, from the remarkable traits and noble qualities that indicate the completeness of faith and nobility of character of the devout

[1] *Al-Mustadrak* of al-Hakim (no. 1570: [1/595]).

[2] *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad (no. 23070). Shaykh Albānī declared it to be *Ṣaḥīḥ* in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Targhīb Wa al-Tarhīb* (no. 1032).

believers who observe the fast is the integrity of their hearts and tongues towards their believing brothers. There is no malice, jealousy or contempt in their hearts, and there is no backbiting, tale-carrying, lying or attacks upon their tongues.

Instead, they carry nothing in their hearts except love, good, mercy, affection and benevolence, and nothing is uttered by their tongues except beneficial words, gainful statements and truthful supplications. They are in the ranks of those whom Allāh praised and commended with His Saying, the Most High:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُو مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾﴾

> "And those who came after them say: 'Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in Faith, and put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed. Our Lord! You are indeed full of kindness, Most Merciful.'" [Al-Ḥashr: 10]

Allāh described them with two splendid qualities and two noble attributes:

One of them pertains to the tongue. There is nothing towards their believing brothers except sincere advice and supplication:

﴿يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ﴾

> "They say: 'Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in Faith."

The second attribute pertains to the heart. They possess sound hearts towards their believing brothers, and there is no malice, jealousy, hatred, contempt or the like in them.

The soundness of the heart and the tongue is from the clearest proofs and most truthful evidences for the completion and perfection of the fast. The *Salaf* [Rightly Guided Predecessors] used to consider those who had the soundest tongues and hearts to be the best of them.

Iyās b. Muʿāwīyah b. Qurrah said:

> "They used to consider the best from among them – referring to the *Salaf* – to be those with the soundest hearts and those who backbit the least."[1]

Sufyān b. Dinār said:

> "I said to Abū Bashīr, who was from the companions of ʿAlī, 'Inform us of the actions of those who came before us.' He responded, 'They would do small things but would be rewarded greatly.' I said, 'Why was that?' He said, 'Due to the soundness of their hearts.'"[2]

Ramaḍān is a golden opportunity and divine gift for the hearts and tongues to be pure of all sicknesses and impurities. The primary purpose of your fast is not solely to abstain from food and drink while your heart breaks it fast with malice, jealousy and

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[1] Collected by al-Ṭabarānī in *Makārim al-Akhlāq*.

[2] Collected by Ibn Sarrī in his book *al-Zuhd*.

enmity towards the servants of Allāh, or your tongue breaks its fast with backbiting, tale-carrying, treachery, lying, abuse and insults.

This is because the one in this state will not profit anything from his fast except hunger and thirst. There comes in the *ḥadīth*:

رُبَّ صَائِمٍ حَظُّهُ مِنْ صِيَامِهِ الْجُوعُ وَالْعَطَشُ، وَرُبَّ قَائِمٍ حَظُّهُ مِنْ قِيَامِهِ السَّهَرُ

> "Perhaps a fasting person will get no share from his fast save hunger and thirst, and perhaps the one who stands to pray at night will get no share from his standing except sleeplessness."[1]

Imām Aḥmad collected this *ḥadīth*, which was narrated by Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) from the words of the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

The underlying reason for the soundness of the hearts and tongues of these outstanding individuals was the strength of their relationship with Allāh and the intensity of their contentment with Him.

Ibn al-Qayyim (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

> "Contentment opens up the door to safety, and it makes the heart clean and pure of treachery, malice and corruption. No one is safe from the punishment of Allāh except the one who comes to Allāh with a sound heart.

[1] *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad (no. 8842: [2/374]).

> Furthermore, a sound heart is impossible with displeasure and a lack of contentment. The stronger the contentment of the servant the freer the heart is of filth, corruption and treachery, the companion of displeasure. The soundness of the heart, its piety and its sincerity of purpose are the companions of contentment; whereas jealousy is a consequence of displeasure, and the soundness of the heart from this is from the fruits of contentment."[1]

The fruits of the soundness of the heart, which is a benefit of contentment, cannot be calculated nor counted. Soundness of the heart is relaxation, solace and peace in this life, and its reward in the Hereafter is from the best rewards, and its spoils are the greatest of spoils.

There comes in the narration that Zayd b. Aslam said:

> "They entered upon Abū Dujānah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) while he was sick, and his face was glowing. It was said to him, 'Why is your face shining [like this]?' He responded, 'None of my actions were stronger with me than two: I did not speak concerning that which did not concern me, and the other was that my heart was sound towards the Muslims.'"

That which helps the Muslim to possess a sound heart and tongue towards his brothers is to turn to Allāh for refuge and ask Him for this with sincerity and honesty. To reflect over the beneficial outcomes and blessed results of this in this life and the Hereafter;

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[1] *Madārij al-Sālikīn*: Chapter: *Manzilah al-Riḍa.*

and to reflect over the evil outcomes and disastrous consequences which are harvested and reaped by the one who has malice, enmity, jealousy or anything similar in his heart.

It is authentically reported from the Prophet (ﷺ) in many invocations, which have been narrated from him, that he would ask Allāh for the guidance, soundness and firmness of the heart, like his saying (ﷺ):

اللَّهُمَّ آتِ نَفْسِي تَقْوَاهَا وَزَكِّهَا أَنْتَ خَيْرُ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا

> "O Allāh, grant my soul its piety and purify it, You are the Best to purify it."[1]

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ قَلْبٍ لَا يَخْشَعُ

> "O Allāh, I seek refuge in You from a heart that is not humbly submissive."[2]

يَا مُقَلِّبَ الْقُلُوبِ ثَبِّتْ قَلْبِي عَلَى دِينِكَ

> "O changer of hearts, make my heart firm upon Your religion."[3]

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[1] Collected by Muslim (no. 2722), al-Nasā'ī (no. 5460) and Aḥmad (no. 19204).

[2] Collected by al-Tirmidhī (no. 3482) and al-Nasā'ī (5460).

[3] Collected by al-Tirmidhī (no. 2140).

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ لِي فِي قَلْبِي نُورًا

"O Allāh, place light in my heart."[1]

Therefore, let us seize the opportunity of this blessed month to treat the diseases of the hearts and tongues and to strive as much as possible to cleanse and purify them, because through their soundness a person's soul, worldly affairs and religion is safe and sound, and through their corruption his religion and worldly affairs are corrupted.

Verily, the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) taught us an amazing supplication for the Muslim to say in the morning and evening when he goes to his bed. For the individual to seek refuge with Allāh from the two sources of evil from which it stems and its two consequences, which one of them – or both of them – lead to.

Al-Tirmidhī and Abū Dāwūd collected a *ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) that:

أَنَّ أَبَا بَكْرٍ الصِّدِّيقَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مُرْنِي بِكَلِمَاتٍ أَقُولُهُنَّ إِذَا أَصْبَحْتُ وَإِذَا أَمْسَيْتُ؟ قَالَ: قُلْ اللَّهُمَّ فَاطِرَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ عَالِمَ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ رَبَّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَمَلِيكَهُ أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ نَفْسِي وَشَرِّ الشَّيْطَانِ وَشِرْكِهِ قَالَ قُلْهَا إِذَا أَصْبَحْتَ وَإِذَا أَمْسَيْتَ وَإِذَا أَخَذْتَ مَضْجَعَكَ

> "Abū Bakr Al-Ṣiddīq (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) said, 'O Messenger of Allāh, command me with some words to say in the

[1] Collected by Bukharī (no. 6316) and Muslim (no. 763).

morning and in the evening.' He said, 'Say, 'O Allāh, Creator of the heavens and the earth, Knower of the unseen and the seen, Lord and Possessor of everything. I testify that there is nothing worthy of worship in truth but You; and I seek refuge in You from the evil within myself, and from the evil of the devil and his (incitement to) attribute partners (with Allāh)." He said, 'Say this in the morning and in the evening when you sleep.'"[1]

In one narration:

وَأَنْ أَقْتَرِفَ عَلَى نَفْسِي سُوءًا أَوْ أَجُرَّهُ إِلَى مُسْلِمٍ

"And [I seek refuge with You] from perpetrating evil against my soul or inflicting it upon another Muslim."[2]

This great *ḥadīth* comprises of seeking refuge with Allāh from evil, its causes and its consequences, as all evil stems from the soul and the devil. Hence, he (ﷺ) sought refuge with Allāh from them in his statement:

أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ نَفْسِي وَشَرِّ الشَّيْطَانِ وَشِرْكِهِ

"I seek refuge in You from the evil within myself, and from the evil of the devil and his (incitement to) attribute partners (with Allāh)."

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[1] Collected by al-Tirmidhī (no. 3529) and Abū Dāwūd (no. 5067).

[2] Collected by al-Tirmidhī (no. 3529).

The consequence of this evil will either return to the perpetrator himself or to his Muslim brother, so he (ﷺ) sought refuge from this with his saying:

وَأَنْ أَقْتَرِفَ عَلَى نَفْسِي سُوءًا أَوْ أَجُرَّهُ إِلَى مُسْلِمٍ

> "And [I seek refuge with You] from perpetrating evil against my own soul or inflicting it upon another Muslim."

How perfect a supplication this is. How great are its objectives. How pious are its meanings and how beautiful it would be for the fasting person to add it to his statements of remembrance in the morning and evening, when sleeping in this blessed month and the other days of his life!

O Allāh, we ask You for humbly submissive hearts, tongues that remember [You], and souls that are obedient and serene.

We seek refuge with You from the evil of our souls and our actions, we seek refuge with You from the evil of the devil and his incitement to commit *Shirk* [associate partners with Allāh], and [we seek refuge with You] from perpetrating evil against our own souls or inflicting it upon any of the Muslims.

Lesson 6
Preservation of Time in Ramaḍān

In reality, a person's time is their lifespan and it is the decisive component of their eternal life, whether it will be in eternal bliss or severe torment. It passes with the passing of the clouds, and the night and day swiftly diminish their lifespans and bring closer their appointed times of death.

The night and day accompanied those who came before us – Nūḥ, ʿĀd, Thamūd, and many generations between them – and all of them have returned to their Lord, met their deeds and their lifespans have come to an end, whereas the night and day remain fresh and new for nations who succeed them.

Allāh, the Most High, said:

﴿ وَهُوَ جَعَلَ ٱلَّيۡلَ وَٱلنَّهَارَ خِلۡفَةً لِّمَنۡ أَرَادَ أَن يَذَّكَّرَ أَوۡ أَرَادَ شُكُورٗا ﴿٦٢﴾ ﴾

> "And He it is Who has put the night and the day in succession, for such who desires to remember or desires to show his gratitude." [Al-Furqān: 62]

It is upon the Muslim, especially in this blessed month, magnificent season and precious time, to take a lesson and admonition from the passing of the nights and days, as how many Ramaḍāns have we anticipated, and they arrive and quickly depart.

The night and day cause every new thing to decay, they bring close everything far, they bring the lifespans to an end, they cause

the young to enter their youth and the old to vanish. All of this alludes to the departure of this world and its ending, and the arrival of the Hereafter and its approach.

ʿAlī b. Abū Ṭālib (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) said:

ارْتَحَلَتْ الدُّنْيَا مُدْبِرَةً وَارْتَحَلَتْ الْآخِرَةُ مُقْبِلَةً وَلِكُلٍّ وَاحِدَةٍ مِنْهُمَا بَنُونَ ؛ فَكُونُوا مِنْ أَبْنَاءِ الْآخِرَةِ وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنْ أَبْنَاءِ الدُّنْيَا فَإِنَّ الْيَوْمَ عَمَلٌ وَلَا حِسَابَ وَغَدًا حِسَابٌ وَلَا عَمَلٌ

> "The world is departing and the Hereafter is approaching, and each of them have their own children. So be from the children of the Hereafter and do not be from the children of this world. Verily, today there are actions and no reckoning, but tomorrow there is a reckoning and no actions."[1]

ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ) said:

> "Indeed, this world is not your permanent residence. It is an abode that Allāh has decreed for it to perish, and Allāh has decreed for its inhabitants to leave it. How many a populated land will soon be in ruins, and how many a joyful resident will soon depart from his residence. You should therefore – may Allāh have mercy upon you – leave this world with the best

[1] Chapter: Hope and hoping too much [for a long life and worldly pleasures].

> migration that you possibly can; and prepare your provisions, for surely the best provision is piety."[1]

Man is experiencing a reduction in his lifespan since the time he left his mother's womb; rather, he is as al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

> "[He is] a sum of days. Every time a day passes by, then some of the person and part of him passes by too."

A day of his diminishes the month, the month diminishes the year and the year diminishes the lifespan. Every hour that passes the servant by brings him closer to his appointed time of death. Ibn Mas'ūd (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) said:

> "I have not regretted anything the way I regretted a day when the sun set and subtracted from my lifespan, yet my actions did not increase within it."

This was an example of his extreme concern for time.

Al-Ḥasan (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

> "I met a people who had more covetousness for their time than you have covetousness for your Dinars and Dirhams."

For this reason, the one who spends his day in other than fulfilling a right, performing an obligation, doing an honorable thing, attaining something praiseworthy, in good they have established, or knowledge they have acquired, then they have surely

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[1] Collected by Abū Nu'aym in *Ḥilyah al-Awliyā* (5/292).

mistreated their day and oppressed their soul and this day of theirs.

The days and nights are the most precious assets of a person in this life. The profit is Paradise, its loss is the Hellfire, the year is the tree, the months are its branches, the days are its offshoots, the hours are its leaves and the breaths are its fruits. Whoever's breaths are [used] in the obedience of Allāh, then their fruit is pure, blessed and sweet tasting; whereas whoever's breaths are [used] in disobedience to Allāh, then their fruit is nasty, bitter and foul tasting.

There are numerous texts transmitted from the Prophet (ﷺ) clarifying the importance of time, encouraging that it be taken advantage of and not wasted, and clarifying that the servant will be questioned concerning it on the Day of Resurrection.

Ibn ʿAbbās narrated that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

اغْتَنِمْ خَمْسًا قَبْلَ خَمْسٍ: شَبَابَكَ قَبْلَ هَرَمِكَ، وَصِحَّتَكَ قَبْلَ سَقَمِكَ، وَغِنَاكَ قَبْلَ فَقْرِكَ، وَفَرَاغَكَ قَبْلَ شُغْلِكَ، وَحَيَاتَكَ قَبْلَ مَوْتِكَ

> "Take advantage of five before five: your youth before your old age, your health before your sickness, your wealth before your poverty, your free-time before you are busy and your life before your death."[1]

[1] Collected by al-Tirmidhī (no. 2602).

Abū Barzah al-Aslami narrated that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

لاَ تَزُولُ قَدَمَا عَبْدٍ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ حَتَّى يُسْأَلَ عَنْ عُمْرِهِ فِيمَا أَفْنَاهُ وَعَنْ عِلْمِهِ فِيمَا فَعَلَ وَعَنْ مَالِهِ مِنْ أَيْنَ اكْتَسَبَهُ وَفِيمَا أَنْفَقَهُ وَعَنْ جِسْمِهِ فِيمَا أَبْلاَهُ

> "The two feet of a servant will not move forth until he is asked about his lifespan and how he spent it, about his knowledge and what he did with it, about his wealth: how acquired it and how he spent it, and about his body and how he used it."[1]

It is established in the authentic collection [of Imām al-Bukharī] that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

> "There are two blessings which many of the people lose out on: health and free-time."

Let us benefit from this blessed month and magnificent season as much as we can benefit by performing righteous deeds and let us use it to turn to Allāh. Let us benefit from our entire life before death suddenly comes upon us. Let the healthy people whom Allāh has granted wellbeing from sickness and diseases benefit from their health before Allāh trials them with illness which will hinder them and weaken their resolve, and let those whom Allāh has given the blessing of time and free-time benefit from this before they are overcome by work, concerns and events.

Let the youth benefit from their youth and strength before they are afflicted with old age and decrepitude, which is most likely a

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (no. 6412).

period of weakness, lethargy, ailments and sicknesses. Let the rich benefit from that which Allāh has generously bestowed upon them of sustenance and what they have attained of wealth, which are from the transient things of this world, before they experience poverty and are faced with many needs.

Let these individuals benefit from this magnificent season by further endeavoring to draw closer to Allāh, and let them attain the bounties of its gifts, blessings and mercies through sincere repentance, performance of many good deeds and abstention from committing the prohibitions and repugnant acts.

Ibn Rajab (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

> "There is not a virtuous season except that Allāh has legislated in it forms of obedience, which are performed for Him and through which the servants draw nearer to Him, and in it there are blessings which Allāh bestows upon those whom He wills through His favor and mercy. The happy person is the one who takes advantage of the special seasons of the months, days and hours, and draws closer to his Lord during these times through the legislated acts of obedience. Perhaps he will successfully gain this favor and thus experience happiness of the one who is safe from Hell and the fires therein."[1]

[1] *Laṭā'if al-Ma'ārif* of Ibn Rajab (p. 6).

Whoever wastes their free-time during this magnificent season and does not benefit from their health in the like of this noble month, then when will they benefit and be upright?

Ibn al-Jawzī (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

> "Whoever utilizes their free-time and health in the obedience of Allāh, then they are envied, and whoever utilizes them in the disobedience of Allāh, then they are in loss. This is because free-time is followed by preoccupation and health is followed by sickness."[1]

It is narrated that some of the *Salaf* said:

> "A sign of abhorrence is the squandering of time."

Ibn al-Qayyim (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

> "The wastage of time is more severe than death because wasting time severs a person from Allāh and the Hereafter, whereas death severs a person from this world and his family."[2]

It is compulsory for the Muslim not to be fooled by this world because what is sound from it becomes sick, what is new will decay, its enjoyment will come to an end and its youth will become old. Whilst in this world, a person is on a journey to the Hereafter, his lifespan is decreasing, his actions are recorded and death will suddenly come upon him. Whoever plants good will

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[1] Quoted by Ibn Ḥajr in *Fatḥ al-Bārī* (11/230).

[2] *Al-Fawā'id* of Ibn al-Qayyim (p. 44).

shortly harvest its reward and gain, and whoever plants evil will shortly reap regret and sorrow; and every harvester will yield what they have planted.

O Allāh, bless our time, lifespans and actions. Facilitate for us our affair in the right way, grant us success to benefit from our time with the performance of lasting righteous deeds, make beloved to us the doing of good deeds and hated to us evil deeds. Make us from those who fast this month with a fast that will be a means to attain Your pleasure and successfully enter Your gardens of Paradise.

Lesson 7
The Importance of the Remembrance of Allāh

The remembrance of Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic, is the most pure, best and superior of actions with Allāh, the Blessed and Most High. There comes in the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad, *Jāmiʿ al-Tirmidhī*, *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, the *Mustadrak* of al-Ḥākim and other collections a *ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Dardā (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

أَلَا أُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِخَيْرِ أَعْمَالِكُمْ، وَأَزْكَاهَا عِنْدَ مَلِيكِكُمْ، وَأَرْفَعِهَا فِي دَرَجَاتِكُمْ، وَخَيْرٌ لَكُمْ مِنْ إِنْفَاقِ الذَّهَبِ وَالْوَرِقِ، وَخَيْرٌ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْ تَلْقَوْا عَدُوَّكُمْ فَتَضْرِبُوا أَعْنَاقَهُمْ وَيَضْرِبُوا أَعْنَاقَكُمْ؟ قَالُوا بَلَى، قَالَ ذِكْرُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى

> "Shall I not inform you of the best of your actions, the purest of them to your Lord and those which raise you in degree the most, which are better than spending gold and silver, and better for you than meeting your enemies and striking their necks and them striking your necks?" They said, "Certainly." He (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said, "Remembrance of Allāh, the Exalted."[1]

This excellent *ḥadīth* shows the superiority of the remembrance of Allāh and that it is equivalent to emancipating a slave, spending one's wealth, riding on the mount in the path of Allāh and striking with the sword in the path of Allāh, the Most High.

[1] *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad (no. 21599 & 21601) and Tirmidhī (no. 3377). The wording is that mentioned by al-Tirmidhī.

Ibn Rajab said:

> "There are numerous texts indicating the superiority of the remembrance of Allāh over giving charity and other types of actions."[1]

Then he mentioned the aforementioned *ḥadīth* of Abū Dardā (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) and a number of other *aḥādīth* that allude to the same meaning.

Ibn Abū Dunyá narrated, as found in *al-Targhīb Wa al-Tarhīb* of al-Mundhirī who said it is *Ḥasan* [sound], from al-A'mash from Sālim b. Ja'd who said:

> "It was said to Abū Dardā that a man freed one hundred slaves, and he responded, 'Verily, one hundred slaves is a significant amount of money from a man's wealth, but better than that is faith to which one clings day and night, and for the tongue of one of you to be moist with the remembrance of Allāh.'"[2]

He (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) clarified the virtue of emancipating slaves and despite its great virtue it is not equivalent to adhering to the remembrance of Allāh and being consistent upon it.

The superiority of the remembrance of Allāh over other actions has been conveyed from a number of companions and their students, like 'Abdullah b. Mas'ūd and 'Abdullah b. al-'Āṣ. Ibn

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[1] *Jāmi' al-'Ulūm Wa al-Ḥikam*: *ḥadīth* no. 25, p. 66.

[2] Shaykh al-Albānī said in *Ḍa'īf al-Targhīb Wa al-Tarhīb* that this is weak in *Mawqūf* form [i.e. as a statement of a companion].

Rajab (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) has quoted these statements in his book *Jāmi' al-'Ulūm Wa al-Ḥikam.*

Imām Aḥmad and al-Ṭabarānī related a *ḥadīth* narrated by Sahl b. Mu'ādh b. Anas al-Juhanī from his father who said:

أَنَّ رَجُلًا سَأَلَهُ فَقَالَ أَيُّ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ أَعْظَمُ أَجْرًا يَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ؟ قَالَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لِلَّهِ تَعَالَى ذِكْرًا، قَالَ فَأَيُّ الصَّائِمِينَ أَعْظَمُ أَجْرًا ؟ قَالَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لِلَّهِ ذِكْرًا، ثُمَّ ذَكَرَ لَهُ الصَّلَاةَ وَالزَّكَاةَ وَالْحَجَّ وَالصَّدَقَةَ كُلُّ ذَلِكَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: أَكْثَرُهُمْ لِلَّهِ ذِكْرًا، فَقَالَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ لِعُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: ذَهَبَ الذَّاكِرُونَ بِكُلِّ خَيْرٍ !!، فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: أَجَلْ

"A man asked the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), 'Which of the *Mujāhidūn* will receive the greatest reward, O Messenger of Allāh?' He answered, 'The one who remembers Allāh the most.' He said, 'Which of the fasting people will receive the greatest reward?' He said, 'The one who remembers Allāh the most.' Then he mentioned to him the prayer, *Zakāh*, *Hajj* and charity, and about each one the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said, 'The one of them who remembers Allāh the most.' So Abū Bakr said to 'Umar, 'The people of remembrance have taken every good thing.' The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said, 'Indeed.'"[1]

[1] Collected by Imām Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 15553) and al-Ṭabarānī (no. 1887) in *al-Du'ā*. The wording is that collected by al-Ṭabarānī.

[TN] Shaykh Albānī declared this to be weak in *Ḍa'īf al-Targhīb Wa al-Tarhīb* (no. 906).

This noble month is the month of remembrance and praising Allāh, the Lord of the creation. In all actuality, the fast was not legislated nor did anyone fast except to establish the remembrance of Allāh.

Therefore, the Prophet (ﷺ) informed us – as preceded – that the people with the highest rank and greatest reward, even though they all have performed the same act of obedience and righteous deed to the Lord of the heavens and the earth, are those who remember Allāh the most. This highlights the importance of the remembrance of Allāh and that it is the desired goal behind the execution of all acts of obedience and worship. The fasting people who will receive the greatest reward are those who remember Allāh the most.

The remembrance of Allāh is greater than all things and superior to all things. Allāh, the Most High said:

﴿ ٱتْلُ مَآ أُوحِىَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبِ وَأَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ ۖ إِنَّ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ ٱلْفَحْشَآءِ وَٱلْمُنكَرِ ۗ وَلَذِكْرُ ٱللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ۗ ﴾

> "Recite what has been revealed to you of the Book, and perform the prayer. Verily, the prayer prevents from immorality and evil, and the remembering of Allāh is greater indeed." [al-'Ankabūt: 45]

This means that Allāh mentioning you with praise and reward is superior to you remembering Him in your acts of worship and prayers, and Allāh remembers the one who remembers Him. This exegesis was mentioned by Ibn Mas'ūd, Ibn 'Abbās,

Abū Dardā, Abū Qurrah, Salmān and al-Ḥasan, and it is the chosen opinion of al-Ṭabarī.[1]

Another exegesis is that [this verse means] your remembrance of Allāh in your prayers and recitation of the Qur'ān is superior to everything.

It has also been explained to mean that the remembrance of Allāh along with consistent observance of the prayer is the most effective way to prevent immorality and evil.

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymīyah (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

> "The correct understanding of this verse is that the prayer has two main purposes, one is greater than the other: The prayer prevents from immorality and evil deeds and it contains the remembrance of Allāh, the Most High. The remembrance of Allāh present in the prayer is greater than its prevention of immorality and evil deeds."

Salmān al-Fārisī (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) was asked:

> "What actions are best?" He replied: "Do you not read the Qur'ān? Verily, the remembrance of Allāh is greater!"[2]

Ibn Abū Dunyá narrated from Ibn Abbas that he was asked:

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[1] *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī* Surah al-'Ankabūt: 45.

[2] Collected by al-Ṭabarī in his *Tafsīr* (20/183).

> "What action is the best?" He responded: "The remembrance of Allāh is greater."[1]

Allāh commanded His believing servants in His Book to remember Him often: standing, sitting, and on their sides, in the mornings and evenings, in richness and poverty, in health and sickness, private and public and in all situations. He connected to this a splendid reward, great recompense and beautiful abode. He, Most High said:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا ﴿٤١﴾ وَسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا ﴿٤٢﴾ هُوَ
ٱلَّذِى يُصَلِّى عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتُهُۥ لِيُخْرِجَكُم مِّنَ ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ إِلَى ٱلنُّورِ ۚ وَكَانَ
بِٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَحِيمًا ﴿٤٣﴾ تَحِيَّتُهُمْ يَوْمَ يَلْقَوْنَهُۥ سَلَٰمٌ ۚ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَرِيمًا ﴿٤٤﴾﴾

> "O you who believe! Remember Allāh with much remembrance. And glorify His Praises morning and afternoon. He it is Who sends His blessings on you, and His angels too (ask Allāh to bless and forgive you), that He may bring you out from darkness into light. And He is Ever Most Merciful to the believers. Their greeting on the Day they shall meet Him will be, 'Peace.' And He has prepared for them a generous reward (i.e. Paradise)." [Al-Aḥzāb: 41-44]

In this verse there is an encouragement to make much remembrance of Allāh and a clarification of the great reward and extensive good that results from this.

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[1] *Al-Wābil al-Ṣayyib* of Ibn al-Qayyim, p. 151-152.

His Saying:

﴿ هُوَ ٱلَّذِى يُصَلِّى عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتُهُۥ ﴾

> "He it is Who sends His blessings on you, and His angels too (ask Allāh to bless and forgive you)."

In this is a great encouragement to remember Allāh often and the best type of inspiration to do this. This means that Allāh remembers you, so remember Him.

A similar verse to this is His Saying, the Most High:

﴿ كَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا فِيكُمْ رَسُولًا مِّنكُمْ يَتْلُواْ عَلَيْكُمْ ءَايَٰتِنَا وَيُزَكِّيكُمْ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُواْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٥١﴾ فَٱذْكُرُونِىٓ أَذْكُرْكُمْ وَٱشْكُرُواْ لِى وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ ﴿١٥٢﴾ ﴾

> "Similarly, We have sent among you a Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) of your own, reciting to you Our Verses (the Qur'ān) and sanctifying you, and teaching you the Book (the Qur'ān) and the *Hikmah* (i.e. *Sunnah*), and teaching you that which you used not to know. Therefore, remember Me, and I will remember you; and be grateful to Me, and never be ungrateful to Me." [Al-Baqarah: 151-152]

A person reaps what they sow. Whoever remembers Allāh within themselves, then Allāh will remember them, whoever remembers Allāh in a gathering, then Allāh will mention them

in a gathering better than that, and whoever forgets about Allāh, then Allāh will abandon them.

The men and women who remember Allāh much are the *Mufarridūn* who are foremost in doing good and those who receive their share of the highest levels and uppermost ranks. Muslim related in his authentic collection of *ḥadīth* from Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) that:

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَسِيرُ فِي طَرِيقِ مَكَّةَ فَمَرَّ عَلَى جَبَلٍ يُقَالُ لَهُ جُمْدَانُ فَقَالَ: سِيرُوا هَذَا جُمْدَانُ، سَبَقَ الْمُفَرِّدُونَ، قَالُوا وَمَا الْمُفَرِّدُونَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ الذَّاكِرُونَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا وَالذَّاكِرَاتُ

> "Allāh's Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) was travelling along the path leading to Mecca, so he happened to pass by a mountain called Jumdān. He said, 'Proceed on, it is Jumdan. The *Mufarridūn* have gone ahead. They (the Companions of the Prophet) said, 'Allāh's Messenger, who are the *Mufarridūn*?' He said, 'They are those males and females who remember Allāh much.'"[1]

However, how does the servant attain this?

This is an important question, which every Muslim should ponder over and know the answer. From the best explanations conveyed from the *Salaf* concerning the meaning of 'those men and women who mention Allāh much' is what has been narrated from Ibn Abbas (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said:

[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (no 2676).

> "This is referring to those who mention Allāh at the end of the prayers, in the morning and evening and in their beds. Whenever they awake from sleep and every time they depart from their home, in the morning or evening, they mention Allāh."[1]

The statement of al-ʿAllāmah, Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Saʿdī (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) resembles this:

> "The least of this is for the servant to cling to the remembrances of the morning and evening, after the prayers and at certain incidents and situations. This should be consistent at all times and all situations. For verily this is worship through which the doer surpasses others. It is relaxing, leads to the love of Allāh and knowing Him and aids in [the performance of] good and in refraining from improper speech."[2]

I ask Allāh, the Exalted and One free of all imperfections, by His beautiful Names to make me and you from the men and women who mention Allāh much and from those whom Allāh has prepared forgiveness and a great reward. Verily, He is able to do all things and the One who answers the supplications.

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[1] *Al-Adhkār* of al-Nawawī, p. 10.

[2] *Tafsīr al-Saʿdī*: al-Aḥzāb: 41, p. 667.

Lesson 8
The Benefits of Remembrance and Its Merits

A clarification that the remembrance of Allāh is the best and most excellent of actions has already preceded, and that the greater the servant's remembrance of Allāh when performing an action the greater the reward.

This is based upon what was related by Imām Aḥmad and al-Ṭabarānī in a *ḥadīth* narrated by Sahl b. Muʿādh b. Anas al-Juhanī from his father who said:

أَنَّ رَجُلًا سَأَلَهُ فَقَالَ أَيُّ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ أَعْظَمُ أَجْرًا يَا رَسُولُ اللَّه ؟ قَالَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لِلَّهِ تَعَالَى ذِكْرًا، قَالَ فَأَيُّ الصَّائِمِينَ أَعْظَمُ أَجْرًا ؟ قَالَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لِلَّهِ ذِكْرًا، ثُمَّ ذَكَرَ لَهُ الصَّلَاةَ وَالزَّكَاةَ وَالْحَجَّ وَالصَّدَقَةَ كُلُّ ذَلِكَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: أَكْثَرُهُمْ لِلَّهِ ذِكْرًا، فَقَالَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ لِعُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: ذَهَبَ الذَّاكِرُونَ بِكُلِّ خَيْرٍ !!، فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: أَجَلْ

"A man asked the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), 'Which of the *Mujāhidūn* will receive the greatest reward, O Messenger of Allāh?' He answered, 'The one who remembers Allāh the most.' He said, 'Which of the fasting people will receive the greatest reward?' He said, 'The one who remembers Allāh the most.' Then he mentioned to him the prayer, *Zakāh*, *Hajj* and charity, and about each one the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, 'The one of them who remembers Allāh the most.'

> So Abū Bakr said to 'Umar, 'The people of remembrance have taken every good thing.' The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said, 'Indeed.'"[1]

Ibn al-Qayyim said:

> "The best of those who do any action are those who remember Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) the most whilst performing it. The best of those who fast are those who remember Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) the most whilst fasting. The best of those who give charity are those who remember Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) the most. The best of those who perform the Hajj are those who mention Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) the most. The same applies to the rest of the actions."[2]

Allāh does not command with an abundance of anything except due to its importance, lofty status and many merits and benefits, which are attained by the servant who remembers Allāh. Remembrance has benefits that cannot be counted, and it has merits and fruits which cannot be fully expounded upon.

Perhaps it is appropriate here to remind the fasting people of some of the benefits of the remembrance of Allāh:

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[1] Collected by Imām Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 15553) and al-Ṭabarānī (no. 1887) in *al-Du'ā*. The wording is that collected by al-Ṭabarānī.

[TN] Shaykh Albānī declared this to be weak in *Ḍa'īf al-Targhīb Wa al-Tarhīb* (no. 906).

[2] *Al-Wābil al-Ṣayyib* of Ibn al-Qayyim, p. 152.

- It expels, conquers and suppresses the devil. Allāh, the Most High, said:

﴿ وَمَن يَعْشُ عَن ذِكْرِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ نُقَيِّضْ لَهُۥ شَيْطَٰنًا فَهُوَ لَهُۥ قَرِينٌ ﴿٣٦﴾ ﴾

> "And whosoever turns away from the remembrance of the Most Beneficent (Allāh), We appoint for him a devil to be an intimate companion to him." [Al-Zukhruf: 36]

And He said:

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوْا۟ إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَٰٓئِفٌ مِّنَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ تَذَكَّرُوا۟ فَإِذَا هُم مُّبْصِرُونَ ﴿٢٠١﴾ ﴾

> "Verily, those who are pious, when an evil thought comes to them from the devil, they remember (Allāh), and (indeed) they then see (aright)." [Al-Aʿrāf: 201]

It is authentically established from the admonition of Yaḥyá b. Zakarīyāh to the children of Isrāʾīl, as comes in the long *ḥadīth*, where he firstly commanded them with *Tawḥīd* then with prayer, fasting and charity. Then he said:

وَآمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ، فَإِنَّ مَثَلَ ذَلِكَ كَمَثَلِ رَجُلٍ خَرَجَ الْعَدُوُّ فِي أَثَرِهِ سِرَاعًا حَتَّى إِذَا أَتَى عَلَى حِصْنٍ حَصِينٍ فَأَحْرَزَ نَفْسَهُ مِنْهُمْ؛ كَذَلِكَ الْعَبْدُ لَا يُحْرِزُ نَفْسَهُ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ إِلَّا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ

> "I also command you to remember Allāh. For indeed the parable of that is a man whose enemy quickly tracks

him until he reaches an impenetrable fortress in which he protects himself from them. Similarly, the servant does not protect himself from the devil except with the remembrance of Allāh."[1]

- From its benefits is that it brings joy, happiness, serenity and relaxation to the heart of the one who remembers Allāh. Allāh, the Most High, said:

﴿ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُم بِذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ ٱلْقُلُوبُ ﴿٢٨﴾ ﴾

"Those who believe and whose hearts find rest in the remembrance of Allāh, Verily, in the remembrance of Allāh do hearts find rest." [Al-Raʿd: 28]

It is worthy and befitting for the hearts of the believers to only be tranquil and at ease with the remembrance of Allāh, and nothing else. Remembrance is the life and strength of the heart, and the hearts will not live nor receive nourishment except with this.

Shaykh al-Islām said:

"The remembrance of Allāh to the heart is as water is to a fish. What would happen to the fish if it exited the water?"[2]

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[1] Collected by al-Tirmidhī (no. 2863), who said it is *Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ*.

[2] *Majmūʿ al-Fatāwá* of Ibn Taymīyah (10/85); and Ibn al-Qayyim quoted it in *al-Wābil al-Ṣayyib*, p. 85.

- From its benefits is that the one who remembers Allāh will receive the blessing of Allāh remembering him. Allāh, the Most High, said:

﴿ فَٱذۡكُرُونِيٓ أَذۡكُرۡكُمۡ ﴾

"Therefore, remember Me, and I will remember you." [Al-Baqarah: 152]

There also comes in the two authentic collections [Bukhārī and Muslim] a *ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah who said that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) narrated from his Lord that He said:

فَإِنْ ذَكَرَنِي فِي نَفْسِهِ ذَكَرْتُهُ فِي نَفْسِي، وَإِنْ ذَكَرَنِي فِي مَلَإٍ ذَكَرْتُهُ فِي مَلَإٍ خَيْرٍ مِنْهُ

"If he remembers Me in himself, then I remember him in Myself; and if he remembers me in a gathering, then I remember him in a gathering better than it."[1]

- From its benefits is that it reduces the burden of sins and removes them, and saves the one who remembers Allāh from the punishment of Allāh. In the *Musnad*, there is a *ḥadīth* narrated by Muʿādh b. Jabal that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

[1] Bukhārī (no. 7405) and Muslim (no. 2675).

مَا عَمِلَ آدَمِيٌّ عَمَلًا قَطُّ أَنْجَى لَهُ مِنْ عَذَابِ اللَّهِ مِنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ

"There is no action performed by the son of Adam that saves him more from the punishment of Allāh than the remembrance of Allāh."[1]

- From its benefits is that it results in gifts, rewards and bounties, which do not result from other actions, even though it is the easiest act of worship.

There comes in the two authentic collections [Bukhārī and Muslim] a *ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah who said that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

مَنْ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ فِي يَوْمٍ مِائَةَ مَرَّةٍ كَانَتْ لَهُ عَدْلَ عَشْرِ رِقَابٍ، وَكُتِبَتْ لَهُ مِائَةُ حَسَنَةٍ، وَمُحِيَتْ عَنْهُ مِائَةُ سَيِّئَةٍ، وَكَانَتْ لَهُ حِرْزًا مِنْ الشَّيْطَانِ يَوْمَهُ ذَلِكَ حَتَّى يُمْسِيَ، وَلَمْ يَأْتِ أَحَدٌ بِأَفْضَلَ مِمَّا جَاءَ بِهِ إِلَّا أَحَدٌ عَمِلَ أَكْثَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ

"Whoever says 'none has the right to be worshipped in truth except Allāh, alone without any partners. His is the dominion, His is the praise and He is Able to do all things' one Hundred times, has the reward of freeing ten slaves, a hundred good deeds are recorded for him and a hundred bad deeds are wiped away, and he has gained refuge from the devil that day until evening.

[1] *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad (no. 21978).

None shall come with anything better except someone who has done more than this."[1]

This is one example of the gifts and rewards that result from the remembrance of Allāh.

- From its benefits is that it is the seeds of Paradise. Al-Tirmidhī related the hadith narrated by 'Abdullah b. Mas'ūd (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

لَقِيتُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لَيْلَةَ أُسْرِيَ بِي فَقَالَ يَا مُحَمَّدُ أَقْرِئْ أُمَّتَكَ مِنِّي السَّلَامَ وَأَخْبِرْهُمْ: أَنَّ الْجَنَّةَ طَيِّبَةُ التُّرْبَةِ عَذْبَةُ الْمَاءِ وَأَنَّهَا قِيعَانٌ، وَأَنَّ غِرَاسَهَا: سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ

"During the Night Journey, I met Ibrāhīm who said to me, 'O Muhammad, convey my greetings to your nation, and tell them that Paradise has pure soil, its water is sweet, and its expanse is vast, treeless and flat. And its seeds are *Subḥān Allāh* [Glory be to Allāh who is free of all imperfections], *Alḥamdu lillāh* [All praise is due to Allāh], *Lā Ilāha Illa Allāh* [None has the right to be worshipped in truth except Allāh] and *Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is the greatest].'"[2]

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[1] Bukhārī (no. 3293) and Muslim (no. 2691).

[2] Collected by al-Tirmidhī (no. 3462).

[TN] Shaykh Albānī declared this to be sound due to supporting narrations in *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī* (no. 3460).

- From its benefits is that it is light for the individual in this life, it illuminates for him his grave and lights up the bridge in front of him on the Day of Resurrection:

﴿يَهْدِي ٱللَّهُ لِنُورِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَيَضْرِبُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْأَمْثَٰلَ لِلنَّاسِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ
(٣٥) فِى بُيُوتٍ أَذِنَ ٱللَّهُ أَن تُرْفَعَ وَيُذْكَرَ فِيهَا ٱسْمُهُۥ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُۥ فِيهَا بِٱلْغُدُوِّ
وَٱلْءَاصَالِ (٣٦) رِجَالٌ لَّا تُلْهِيهِمْ تِجَٰرَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَن ذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَإِيتَآءِ
ٱلزَّكَوٰةِ ۙ يَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا تَتَقَلَّبُ فِيهِ ٱلْقُلُوبُ وَٱلْأَبْصَٰرُ (٣٧)﴾

> "Allāh guides to His Light whom He wills. And Allāh sets forth parables for mankind, and Allāh is All-Knower of everything. In houses, which Allāh has ordered to be raised (to be cleaned, and to be honored), in them His Name is glorified in the mornings and in the afternoons or the evenings; men whom neither trade nor sale diverts them from the Remembrance of Allāh, nor from performing prayer, nor from giving the *Zakāh*. They fear a Day when hearts and eyes will be overturned." [Al-Nūr: 35-37]

And He said:

﴿أَوَمَن كَانَ مَيْتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَٰهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُۥ نُورًا يَمْشِى بِهِۦ فِى ٱلنَّاسِ كَمَن مَّثَلُهُۥ فِى
ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِّنْهَا ۚ﴾

> "Is he who was dead and We gave him life and set for him a light (of Belief) whereby he can walk amongst

men, like him who is in the darkness from which he can never come out?" [Al-An'ām: 122]

The believer is illuminated through faith in Allāh, love of Him and His remembrance, whereas the one heedless of this is in layers of darkness, one on top of the other. Ultimate success is the attainment of this light and ultimate misery is to miss out and be deprived of it. That is why the Prophet (ﷺ) used to often ask Allāh for this light and for Him to place it in all his limbs and in every speck of him, that which is apparent and that which is hidden, and to encompass him in it from all directions.

- From its benefits is that it leads to Allāh sending blessings upon the one who remembers Him, and His angels ask Allāh to bestow upon him blessings. This in itself is success and triumph.

Allāh, the Most High, said:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱذْكُرُواْ ٱللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا ﴿٤١﴾ وَسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا ﴿٤٢﴾ هُوَ ٱلَّذِى يُصَلِّى عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتُهُۥ لِيُخْرِجَكُم مِّنَ ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ إِلَى ٱلنُّورِ ۚ وَكَانَ بِٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَحِيمًا ﴿٤٣﴾﴾

"O you who believe! Remember Allāh with much remembrance. And glorify His Praises morning and afternoon. He it is Who sends His blessings on you, and His angels too (ask Allāh to bless and forgive you), that He may bring you out from darkness into light. And He is Ever Most Merciful to the believers."
[Al-Aḥzāb: 41-43]

- From its benefits is that it is a cure for the heart and a protection against hypocrisy.

Allāh, the Most High, said:

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تُلْهِكُمْ أَمْوَٰلُكُمْ وَلَآ أَوْلَٰدُكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْخَٰسِرُونَ ٩ ﴾

"O you who believe! Let not your properties or your children divert you from the remembrance of Allāh. And whosoever does that, then they are the losers." [Al-Munāfiqūn: 9]

He said about the hypocrites:

﴿ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ ٱللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴾

"And they do not remember Allāh but little." [Al-Nisā: 142]

ʿAlī b. Abū Ṭālib (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) said, when he was asked whether those involved in the incident of al-Jamal were hypocrites:

"The hypocrites do not mention Allāh but little."[1]

Makḥūl b. ʿAbdullah (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

[1] Collected by al-Bayhaqī in *Sunan al-Kubra* (no. 16499).

> "Verily, the remembrance of Allāh is a cure and the remembrance of people is a sickness."[1]

- From its benefits is that frequent remembrance of Allāh substitutes for other acts of obedience and takes their place, whether this pertains to physical actions or wealth, or acts of worship that pertain to both physical deeds and wealth, such as the supererogatory *Hajj*.

This has clearly been mentioned in the *ḥadīth* related by the two Shaykhs [Bukhārī and Muslim] which was narrated by Abū Hurairah where the poor complained to the Prophet (ﷺ) that the wealthy had taken all the reward, so he said to them:

أَفَلَا أُعَلِّمُكُمْ شَيْئًا تُدْرِكُونَ بِهِ مَنْ سَبَقَكُمْ وَتَسْبِقُونَ بِهِ مَنْ بَعْدَكُمْ وَلَا يَكُونُ أَحَدٌ أَفْضَلَ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا مَنْ صَنَعَ مِثْلَ مَا صَنَعْتُمْ؟ قَالُوا بَلَى يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، قَالَ تُسَبِّحُونَ وَتُكَبِّرُونَ وَتَحْمَدُونَ دُبُرَ كُلِّ صَلَاةٍ ثَلَاثًا وَثَلَاثِينَ مَرَّةً

> "Shall I not teach you something through which you may catch up with those who have gone ahead of you, and go ahead of those who come after you, and there will be no one who is better than you except those who do as you do?" They said, "Yes, O Messenger of Allāh." He said, "Glorify Allāh [*Subḥān Allāh*], extol His greatness [*Allāhu Akbar*] and praise Him [*Alḥamdu lillāh*] after every prayer thirty-three times."[2]

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[1] Collected by al-Bayhaqī in *Shuʿab al-Īmān* (no. 717).

[2] Bukhārī (no. 843) and Muslim (no. 595), and the wording is that related by the latter.

He stipulated the remembrance of Allāh as a replacement for what they missed of *Hajj*, *'Umrah* and *Jihad*.

In the *ḥadīth* narrated by 'Abdullah b. Busr which was related by al-Tirmidhī:

أَنَّ رَجُلًا قَالَ : يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ شَرَائِعَ الْإِسْلَامِ قَدْ كَثُرَتْ عَلَيَّ فَأَخْبِرْنِي بِشَيْءٍ أَتَشَبَّثُ بِهِ ؟ قَالَ لَا يَزَالُ لِسَانُكَ رَطْبًا مِنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ

> "A man said, 'O Messenger of Allāh, indeed the legislated acts of Islām have become too much for me, so inform me of something I should adhere to.' He replied, 'Your tongue should not cease to be moist with the remembrance of Allāh.'"[1]

The Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) – and he is the sincere advisor – directed him towards that which would allow him to fulfil the legislated acts, if he loved and adhered to it.

This is a brief discussion of a vast subject and small number of many of the blessed benefits of the remembrance of Allāh, its ripe fruits and marvelous yields. Thus, it is befitting for the believing servants of Allāh to remember Him much so that they can attain these great rewards, noble bounties and blessed fruits, especially as we are living in this noble month and excellent season, the month of remembrance and the Qur'ān, the season of obedience and benevolence.

We ask Allāh, the Most Generous, to light our hearts with His remembrance, to make our time be utilized in His obedience and

[1] *Sunan al-Tirmidhī* (no. 3375).

to make our tongues always moist with His remembrance, His thanks and correct worship of Him.

Lesson 9
The Excellence of the Qur'ān and Its Elevated Station

The blessed month of Ramaḍān is the month of the Qur'ān in which it was revealed. Allāh, the Most High, said:

﴿شَهۡرُ رَمَضَانَ ٱلَّذِيٓ أُنزِلَ فِيهِ ٱلۡقُرۡءَانُ هُدٗى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَٰتٖ مِّنَ ٱلۡهُدَىٰ وَٱلۡفُرۡقَانِۚ﴾

> "The month of Ramadan in which was revealed the Qur'ān, a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance and the criterion (between right and wrong)." [Al-Baqarah: 185]

It is the month of remembrance, and the best thing for the servant to remember Allāh with in this noble month is His Speech, the Blessed and Most High, which is the best, most perfect, most beneficial and most truthful of speech. It is the revelation of Allāh and that which He sent down, which falsehood cannot approach from before or from behind it. It is the best Book that Allāh revealed to the best Messenger, his servant, chosen one and finest of His creation, Muḥammad b. 'Abdullah (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

How beautiful is it for us to be conscious of the excellence of the Qur'ān, its virtue and lofty station, especially in the month that it was revealed!

Allāh, the Most High, said clarifying the excellence and elevated place of the Qur'ān:

﴿وَلَا يَأْتُونَكَ بِمَثَلٍ إِلَّا جِئْنَٰكَ بِٱلْحَقِّ وَأَحْسَنَ تَفْسِيرًا ﴿٣٣﴾﴾

"And no example or similitude do they bring (to oppose or to find fault in you or in this Qur'ān), but We reveal to you the truth (against that similitude or example), and the better explanation thereof." [Al-Furqān: 33]

Ibn Kathīr (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

"In this is a precise clarification of the excellence of the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), as revelation from the Qur'ān would come to him from Allāh morning and evening, night and day and during times of traveling and residency. On each occasion, the angel would come to him with the Qur'ān, and each occasion was like a Book being revealed from the previous Books. Therefore, this station is superior, higher and better than the rest of his brothers from the other Prophets, may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon all of them. The Qur'ān is the best Book that Allāh revealed, and Muḥammad (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) is the best Prophet that Allāh sent."[1]

Verily, the excellence of the Qur'ān, its lofty station and elevated place is something that is not hidden from the Muslims. It is the Book of Allāh, the Lord of the creation, and the Speech of the Creator of all the creation. It contains information of those who came before us, news of those who will appear after us and a judgement for what transpires between us. It is a decisive statement and not amusement.

[1] *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*: Surah al-Furqān.

Any tyrant who abandons it, Allāh will destroy him; and whoever seeks guidance in other than it, Allāh will send him astray. It is the unbreakable rope of Allāh, the precise and wise message and the straight path. With it, the desires will not deviate nor will the tongues err. The scholars never become tired of it. It never feels repetitive with its numerous responses, nor do its marvels come to an end.

Whoever speaks with it is truthful, whoever acts upon it will be rewarded, whoever judges with it is just and whoever invites to it has been guided to the straight path.

The excellence of the Qur'ān and its virtue is according to the excellence of the One who possesses this as an attribute and His greatness. The Qur'ān is the Speech of Allāh and His Attribute, so just as He, the Blessed and Most High, has nothing like Him nor anything that resembles Him in His Names and Attributes, then there is nothing like Him nor that resembles Him in His Speech.

To Him, the Blessed and Most High, belongs absolute perfection as it relates to His Names and His Attributes; none of the creation resemble Him, and He does not resemble any of the creation. He is far above and free of having anything like or similar to Him:

﴿لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِۦ شَيْءٌۖ وَهُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْبَصِيرُ﴾

> "There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer." [Al-Shūra: 11]

The difference between the speech of Allāh and the speech of the creation is like the difference between the Creator and the creation. Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī said:

> "The excellence of the Qur'ān over other speech is like the excellence of the Lord over His creation; this is because it came from Him."[1]

This wording has been reported as being a statement of the Prophet (ﷺ); however, it is not authentic[2] as explained by Imām al-Bukhārī – and other Imāms of knowledge – in his *book Khalq Afʿāl al-ʿIbād*. As for the meaning then it is correct, no doubt about it, and there is no doubt concerning its precision, potency, correctness and beautiful wording. The people of knowledge have mentioned many texts to support the correctness of its meaning, to the extent that Imām al-Bukhārī entitled one of the chapters of his authentic collection of *ḥadīth* within 'The Book of the Virtues of the Qur'ān' with this. He said in the seventeenth chapter: 'Chapter: The Excellence of the Qur'ān Over All Other Speech'.

It is obligatory upon us – O believers – to attach great importance to the noble Qur'ān, which is the Speech of our Lord, the source of our honor and the path of our happiness, to preserve its station and elevated place, to respect it as it deserves, to properly understand it and to act upon it.

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[1] Collected by al-Bayhaqī in *Shuʿab al-Īmān* (no. 2137).

[2] Refer to *al-Ḍaʿīfah* of Shaykh Albānī (no. 1334).

Ibn Mas'ūd (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) said:

> "Whoever would like to know whether they love Allāh, then let them compare themselves to the Qur'ān. If they love the Qur'an, then they love Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic, as the Qur'ān is the Speech of Allāh."[1]

He also said (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ):

> "The Qur'ān is the Speech of Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic, so whoever rejects anything from it is rejecting [the Words of] Allāh."[2]

Considering this, the *Salaf* had great concern and attached the utmost importance to the Qur'ān in the month of the Qur'ān, the blessed month of Ramaḍān. Their example in this was the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), whom Jibrīl would meet every night to review the Qur'ān. Bukhārī and Muslim related a *ḥadīth* narrated by Ibn Abbas (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said:

> كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَجْوَدَ النَّاسِ، وَكَانَ أَجْوَدُ مَا يَكُونُ فِي رَمَضَانَ حِينَ يَلْقَاهُ جِبْرِيلُ، وَكَانَ يَلْقَاهُ فِي كُلِّ لَيْلَةٍ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ فَيُدَارِسُهُ الْقُرْآنَ، فَلَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَجْوَدُ بِالْخَيْرِ مِنْ الرِّيحِ الْمُرْسَلَةِ

[1] *Al-Sunnah* of 'Abdullah b. Aḥmad (no. 125: [1/148]).

[2] *Al-Sunnah* of 'Abdullah b. Aḥmad (no. 119: [1/144]).

> "The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) was the most generous of people. He was most generous in Ramaḍān when Jibrīl would come to him. Jibrīl would meet him every night and review the Qur'ān with him during the month of Ramaḍān. The Messenger of Allāh was more generous than the blowing wind."[1]

The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) would prolong the recitation of the Qur'ān in the Night prayer of Ramaḍān more than other times. This is legislated for anyone who wants to elongate his recitation and pray longer, if they are praying alone, and for the one who leads a congregation, if they are pleased with [the length of] his prayer. However, at other times it is legislated to lighten the prayer.

Imām Aḥmad said to some of his companions:

> "Indeed, these people are weak, so recite five, six, and seven." So [one of them said]: "I recited the Qur'ān, and I completed the Qur'ān on the twenty-seventh night."[2]

Thus, he directed him to take into consideration the state of those being led in the prayer, as to not make it burdensome for them.

The *Salaf* would recite the Qur'ān in the month of Ramaḍān in the prayer and outside of it. Al-Aswad would complete the Qur'ān every two nights in Ramaḍān, al-Nakhaʿī would do this specifically in the last ten and complete it every three days during

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[1] Bukhārī (no. 6) and Muslim (no. 2308).

[2] Ibn Rajab mentioned this in *Laṭā'if Wa al-Maʿārif*, p. 180.

the rest of the month. Qatadah would always complete it every seven days, and in Ramaḍān every three days, but in the last ten days each night.

Al-Zuhrī (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) would say when Ramaḍān had arrived:

> "Now is only the time for reciting the Qur'ān and feeding food [to the needy]."

Imām Mālik (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) would abstain from reading *aḥādīth* and the sittings of the people of knowledge, and he would focus on reciting the Qur'ān from the *Muṣḥaf*.

Qatadah (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) would study the Qur'ān in Ramaḍān.

Sufyān al-Thawrī (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) would abandon all [supererogatory acts of] worship and focus on reciting the Qur'ān. There are many narrations with a similar meaning transmitted from them.[1]

May Allāh allow us and you to follow them properly and walk in their footsteps. We ask Him, the Blessed and Most High, with His Beautiful Names and Perfect Attributes to enlighten our hearts with the love, deference and respect of the Qur'ān, and to allow us to act upon it. [We ask Him] to make us from the people of the Qur'ān, those who are closest to Allāh and His elite.

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[1] Ibn Rajab mentioned this in *Laṭā'if Wa al-Ma'ārif*, p. 181.

Lesson 10
The Importance of Understanding the Qur'ān and Acting Upon It

Allāh, the Most High, said:

﴿شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أُنزِلَ فِيهِ ٱلْقُرْءَانُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَٰتٍ مِّنَ ٱلْهُدَىٰ وَٱلْفُرْقَانِ﴾

"The month of Ramaḍān in which was revealed the Qur'ān, a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance and the criterion (between right and wrong)." [Al-Baqarah: 185]

And He, the Most High, said:

﴿كِتَٰبٌ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَٰرَكٌ لِّيَدَّبَّرُوٓا۟ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ٢٩﴾

"(This is) a Book (the Qur'ān) which We have sent down to you, full of blessings that they may ponder over its Verses, and that men of understanding may remember." [Ṣād: 29]

The recitation of the Qur'ān and reflection upon it is from the greatest doors to guidance, because the Qur'ān guides to that which is most just and correct, it directs and leads to the performance of good deeds and the abandonment of evil deeds, it fills the heart with faith and knowledge of Allāh, it encourages the successful pursuit and attainment of the abode of nobility and

it warns and frightens from loss and deprivation in the abode of humiliation and regret.

It comprises of many lessons and parables which Allāh presents to mankind, but none understand them except those who possess knowledge. For him who recites the Qur'ān with reflection and contemplation, then this will urge him to answer the command of Allāh and His Messenger, glorify Allāh and single Him out alone [with Islamic Monotheism], perform the prayer, give his Zakāh, make his compulsory Hajj and fast his month. In addition to him competing and racing to carry out the supererogatory deeds and acts of piety, hoping for the Mercy of Allāh and His Pleasure.

Allāh. The Most High, said:

﴿ إِنَّ هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ يَهْدِى لِلَّتِى هِىَ أَقْوَمُ وَيُبَشِّرُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ
ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٩﴾ ﴾

> "Verily, this Qur'ān guides to that which is most just and right and gives glad tidings to the believers who work deeds of righteousness, that they shall have a great reward (Paradise)." [Al-Isrā: 9]

And He (سُبْحَانَهُۥ وَتَعَالَىٰ) said:

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَتْلُونَ كِتَٰبَ ٱللَّهِ وَأَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَأَنفَقُوا۟ مِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ
سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً يَرْجُونَ تِجَٰرَةً لَّن تَبُورَ ﴿٢٩﴾ لِيُوَفِّيَهُمْ أُجُورَهُمْ
وَيَزِيدَهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ غَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ ﴿٣٠﴾ ﴾

> "Verily, those who recite the Book of Allāh (this Qur'ān), and perform prayer, and spend (in charity) out of what We have provided for them, secretly and openly, hope for a profit that will never perish. That He may pay them their wages in full, and give them (even) more, out of His Grace. Verily! He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Ready to appreciate (good deeds and to recompense)." [Al-Fāṭir: 29-20]

The recitation of the Qur'ān, contemplation over it and its implementation is the custom of the believers and an attribute of the righteous *Awliyā* of Allāh, and it is a means for Allāh to guide His righteous servants; whereas to abandon reflecting over the Qur'ān and acting upon it is a description of the antagonistic sinners, and it is a cause of the deviation of the misguided and the arrogant.

Allāh, the Most High, said, criticizing them for this:

﴿أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ أَمْ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَآ ٢٤﴾

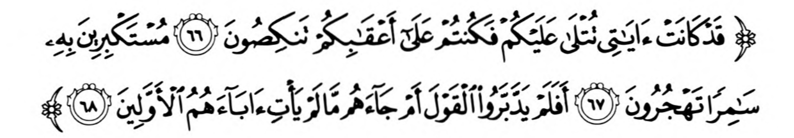
> "Do they not then think deeply in the Qur'ān, or are their hearts locked up (from understanding it)?" [Muḥammad: 24]

And He (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ) said:

﴿أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ ۚ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِندِ غَيْرِ ٱللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا۟ فِيهِ ٱخْتِلَـٰفًا كَثِيرًا ٨٢﴾

"Do they not then consider the Qur'ān carefully? Had it been from other than Allāh, they would surely have found therein much contradictions." [Al-Nisā: 82]

He, the Most High, said:



"Indeed, My Verses used to be recited to you, but you used to turn back on your heels (denying them, and with hatred to listen to them). In pride, talking evil about it (the Qur'ān) by night. Have they not pondered over the Word (of Allāh), or has there come to them what had not come to their fathers of old?" [Al-Mu'minūn: 66-68]

This means that if they reflected over the Qur'ān, it would have led them to faith and prevented them from disobedience and disbelief. So this proves that contemplation over the Qur'ān incites to all that is good and protects from all that is evil.

Allāh described the Qur'ān as being the best speech. [He mentioned] that He repeated the verses within it and reiterated the statements, so that it could be understood, and that the skins of the pious tremble when they listen to it, fearing and being afraid of Allāh. He, the Most High said:

﴿ٱللَّهُ نَزَّلَ أَحۡسَنَ ٱلۡحَدِيثِ كِتَٰبٗا مُّتَشَٰبِهٗا مَّثَانِيَ تَقۡشَعِرُّ مِنۡهُ جُلُودُ ٱلَّذِينَ
يَخۡشَوۡنَ رَبَّهُمۡ ثُمَّ تَلِينُ جُلُودُهُمۡ وَقُلُوبُهُمۡ إِلَىٰ ذِكۡرِ ٱللَّهِۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُدَى ٱللَّهِ
يَهۡدِي بِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُۚ وَمَن يُضۡلِلِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ مِنۡ هَادٍ ٢٣﴾

"Allāh has sent down the best statement, a Book (this Qur'ān), its parts resembling each other in goodness and truth, oft-repeated. The skins of those who fear their Lord shiver from it (when they recite it or hear it). Then their skin and their heart soften to the remembrance of Allāh. That is the guidance of Allāh. He Guides with this those whom He pleases; and whomever Allāh sends astray, for him there is no guide." [Al-Zumar: 23]

Allāh censured the believers for their lack of submissiveness when listening to the Qur'ān and He warned them against imitating the disbelievers in this:

﴿۞أَلَمۡ يَأۡنِ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ أَن تَخۡشَعَ قُلُوبُهُمۡ لِذِكۡرِ ٱللَّهِ وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ ٱلۡحَقِّ وَلَا
يَكُونُواْ كَٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُواْ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ مِن قَبۡلُ فَطَالَ عَلَيۡهِمُ ٱلۡأَمَدُ فَقَسَتۡ قُلُوبُهُمۡۖ وَكَثِيرٞ مِّنۡهُمۡ
فَٰسِقُونَ ١٦﴾

"Has not the time come for the hearts of those who believe to be affected by Allāh's Reminder (this Qur'ān), and that which has been revealed of the truth, lest they become as those who received the Scripture [the Taurāt (Torah) and the Injīl (Gospel)] before, and the term was prolonged for them and so their hearts were hardened?

And many of them were rebellious, disobedient to Allāh." [Al-Ḥadīd: 16]

Allāh informed us that the Qur'ān increases the believers in faith, if they recite it and reflect over its verses:

﴿إِنَّمَا ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنُونَ ٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ ٱللَّهُ وَجِلَتۡ قُلُوبُهُمۡ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتۡ عَلَيۡهِمۡ ءَايَٰتُهُۥ زَادَتۡهُمۡ إِيمَٰنٗا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمۡ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ٢﴾

"The believers are only those who, when Allāh is mentioned, feel a fear in their hearts and when His Verses (this Qur'ān) are recited unto them, they (i.e. the Verses) increase their Faith; and they put their trust in their Lord (Alone)." [Al-Anfāl: 2]

He informed us about the righteous among the people of the scripture, that when the Qur'ān is recited to them they fall on their faces in prostration, crying, and it increases them in humility, faith and submission. He (سُبۡحَانَهُۥ وَتَعَالَىٰ) said:

﴿قُلۡ ءَامِنُواْ بِهِۦٓ أَوۡ لَا تُؤۡمِنُوٓاْۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُواْ ٱلۡعِلۡمَ مِن قَبۡلِهِۦٓ إِذَا يُتۡلَىٰ عَلَيۡهِمۡ يَخِرُّونَۤ لِلۡأَذۡقَانِۤ سُجَّدٗا ١٠٧ وَيَقُولُونَ سُبۡحَٰنَ رَبِّنَآ إِن كَانَ وَعۡدُ رَبِّنَا لَمَفۡعُولٗا ١٠٨ وَيَخِرُّونَ لِلۡأَذۡقَانِ يَبۡكُونَ وَيَزِيدُهُمۡ خُشُوعٗا۩ ١٠٩﴾

"Say: 'Believe in it (the Qur'ān) or do not believe (in it). Verily, those who were given knowledge before it, when it is recited to them, fall down on their faces in humble prostration.' And they say: 'Glory be to our Lord! Truly, the Promise of our Lord must be fulfilled.'

> And they fall upon their faces weeping, and the Qur'ān increases them in humble submission." [Al-Isrā: 107-109]

Furthermore, Allāh warned His servants from turning away from the Qur'ān with the severest warning. He clarified the danger of this, the sins that result from it and the wrongdoings which the servant will carry the burden of on the Day of Resurrection due to him turning away from the Qur'ān and him not receiving it with acceptance and submission.

Allāh, the Most High, said:

﴿وَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَٰكَ مِن لَّدُنَّا ذِكْرًا ۝٩٩ مَّنْ أَعْرَضَ عَنْهُ فَإِنَّهُۥ يَحْمِلُ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ وِزْرًا ۝١٠٠ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهِ وَسَآءَ لَهُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ حِمْلًا ۝١٠١﴾

> "And indeed, We have given you from Us a Reminder (this Qur'ān). Whoever turns away from it, verily, they will bear a heavy burden (of sins) on the Day of Resurrection. They will abide in that (state in the Fire of Hell), and evil indeed will it be that load for them on the Day of Resurrection." [Ṭaha: 99-101]

If the Qur'ān was a reminder for the Messenger (ﷺ) and his nation, then it is obligatory upon us to receive it with total acceptance, submission, surrender and respect. To seek guidance to the straight path through its light, and to focus upon it by learning, teaching and implementing its directions, so that we can be blessed with a good life in this world and for it to intercede for us after death and in the Hereafter.

Additionally, to respond to it by turning away and showing aversion to it, or with that which is even worse than this such as rejection and denial, is misguidance, deviation, disbelief and transgression. The perpetrator of which deserves a punishment in this life of a miserable life, unhappiness and deprivation, and on the Day of Judgment he will be abandoned and gathered with the blind in Hell.

He, the Most High, said:

﴿فَإِمَّا يَأۡتِيَنَّكُم مِّنِّي هُدٗى فَمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا يَضِلُّ وَلَا يَشۡقَىٰ ١٢٣
وَمَنۡ أَعۡرَضَ عَن ذِكۡرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُۥ مَعِيشَةٗ ضَنكٗا وَنَحۡشُرُهُۥ يَوۡمَ ٱلۡقِيَٰمَةِ
أَعۡمَىٰ ١٢٤ قَالَ رَبِّ لِمَ حَشَرۡتَنِيٓ أَعۡمَىٰ وَقَدۡ كُنتُ بَصِيرٗا ١٢٥ قَالَ كَذَٰلِكَ أَتَتۡكَ
ءَايَٰتُنَا فَنَسِيتَهَاۖ وَكَذَٰلِكَ ٱلۡيَوۡمَ تُنسَىٰ ١٢٦﴾

> "Then if there comes to you guidance from Me, then whoever follows My Guidance shall neither go astray, nor fall into distress and misery. But whosoever turns away from My Reminder, then verily for him is a life of hardship, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Resurrection. He will say: 'O my Lord! Why have you raised me up blind, while I had sight (before)?' (Allāh) will say: 'Like this, Our *Āyāt* (proofs and signs) came unto you, but you disregarded them, and so this Day, you will be neglected.'" [Ṭaha: 123-126]

It is befitting every Muslim, especially in this blessed month and special season, to attach great importance to the Qur'ān, to respect it as it should be respected and recite it properly by

reflecting upon its verses, thinking and contemplating upon its meanings, and implementing what it necessitates.

Al-ʿAllāmah Ibn al-Qayyim (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) stated:

> "There is nothing more beneficial for the heart than reciting the Qur'ān with contemplation and reflection. The Qur'ān comprehensively encompasses all the stations of the travelers, the conditions of the doers, and the levels of those with understanding. It is the Qur'ān that induces love, yearning, fear, hope, repentance, reliance, pleasure, dependence, gratitude, patience and all other states that the life of the heart and its perfection depend upon. Similarly, it prevents all the ignoble characteristics and actions that cause the corruption and destruction of the heart.
>
> If people knew what the recitation of the Qur'ān with contemplation contains [of benefits], they would occupy themselves with it instead of anything else. When a person reads it with reflection and he comes across a verse that he requires to cure his heart, he repeats it, even if he repeats it a hundred times or the entire night. The recitation of a single verse of the Qur'ān with contemplation and reflection is better than reading the whole Qur'ān without any understanding or reflection. It is also more beneficial for the heart and more effective in [actualizing] the attainment of faith and the tasting of the sweetness of the Qur'ān."[1]

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[1] *Miftāh Dār al-Saʿādah* (1/187).

His speech is very accurate and of great benefit. Whoever recites the Qur'ān according to this description, then the Qur'ān will have a profound effect upon him and he will experience the utmost benefit from his recitation. He will be from the people of knowledge and those firm in faith. This is the objective of the Qur'ān and that which is sought from it.

Hence, Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymīyah (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

> "That which is sought, as it relates to the Qur'ān, is to understand its meanings and act upon it. If this is not the goal of the one memorizing it, then he is not from the people of knowledge and religiosity."[1]

O Allāh, make the Qur'ān the spring of our hearts, the light of our chests, the banisher of our sorrows and the remover of our anxieties and worries.

[O Allāh], teach us from it what we are ignorant of and benefit us with what You teach us; and allow us to recite it correctly and reflect upon it. Grant us success to act upon it and implement its commands and stay away from its prohibitions.

[O Allāh], raise us through it on the day when our deeds will be presented before You, and grant us refuge – O Allāh – from being heedless concerning it and turning away from it.

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[1] *Majmū' al-Fatāwá* (5/262).

Lesson 11
Ramaḍān Is the Month of Piety

Allāh, the Blessed and Most High, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy commanded His servants with piety, through which they will achieve happiness in this life and on the Day when the witnesses will stand forth, and they will earn His Pleasure, successfully attain His abode of dignity and be safe from His Fire and punishment. It is His instruction to the first and last of His creation. He, the Most High, said:

﴿وَلَقَدْ وَصَّيْنَا ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَـٰبَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ أَنِ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ۚ وَإِن تَكْفُرُوا۟ فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَنِيًّا حَمِيدًا﴾

> "And We have instructed those who were given the Scripture before you and yourselves to fear Allāh. But if you disbelieve - then to Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. And ever is Allāh Free of need and Praiseworthy." [Al-Nisā: 131]

He (سُبْحَانَهُۥ وَتَعَالَىٰ) legislated for His servants to fast the blessed month of Ramaḍān to actualize their fear of Him. He, the Most High, said:

﴿يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ١٨٣﴾

> "O you who believe! Observing the fast is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may attain piety." [Al-Baqarah: 183]

[So that you may attain piety] through fasting, because fasting is a course to piety due to what in entails of suppression of the soul and the subjugation of the lusts. The fast in this noble month was not legislated except for the actualization of piety. Rather, it is one of the things that assists most to achieve it.

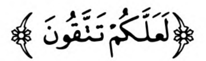
Ibn al-Qayyim (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

> "Fasting has an amazing effect in preserving the [physical] outer strengths and the spiritual faculties, and in protecting them from any imbalance that brings to them harmful elements, which if gain ascendency will ruin and spoil them. And it has a remarkable effect in eliminating all harmful entities that prevent them from being healthy. Therefore, fasting preserves the health of the heart and limbs, and it returns to them all that which has been stolen from them at the hands of the lusts and desires. It is from the greatest aids in attaining piety, as Allāh says:

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ كُتِبَ عَلَيۡكُمُ ٱلصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبۡلِكُمۡ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تَتَّقُونَ ١٨٣ ﴾

> "O you who believe! Observing the fast is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may attain piety." [Al-Baqarah: 183]"[1]

Al-'Allāmah, Shaykh 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sa'dī (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said in his *Tafsīr*, explaining the Saying of Allāh:



"That you may attain piety."

"Verily, fasting is one the greatest ways to attain piety, because it comprises of implementation of the commands of Allāh and abandonment of His prohibitions. It comprises of piety [in that]:

- The Fasting person abandons what Allāh has forbidden him from of food, drink, sexual relations and the like, which his soul inclines towards, seeking to draw closer to Allāh through this and hoping for His reward by refraining from it. This is piety.

- The fasting person trains himself to be conscious of Allāh, the Most High, so he abandons what his soul desires, even though he has the ability to carry out this act, due to his knowledge that Allāh is watching him.

- Fasting constricts the pathways of the devil, as he flows through the son of Adam like the passage of blood. Thus, through fasting his influence is weakened, and the person commits less acts of disobedience.

[1] *Zād al-Ma'ād*, p. 201.

- The fasting person normally increases in acts of obedience, and acts of obedience are from the traits of piety.

- When the rich person tastes the pain of hunger, this causes him to be sympathetic to the poor and destitute. This is a trait of piety."

Taqwá of Allāh is to obey Him by implementing his commands and abandoning His prohibitions. The [linguistic] meaning of *Taqwá* is for the servant to place a shield between himself and what he fears. Therefore, the servant having *Taqwá* of Allāh means for him to place a protection between himself and what he fears of His anger, wrath and punishment, which will shield him from that. This is not possible except by performing acts of obedience and abandoning acts of disobedience.

Allāh sometimes commands [His servants] with *Taqwá* of Him, as He is to be feared and He is hoped for, and all good that befalls the servant is from Him. Sometimes He commands with [*Taqwá*] fear of the Fire, which is the final destination for those who oppose *Taqwá* of Him and follow their desires, as He, the Most High, said:

﴿فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱلنَّارَ ٱلَّتِى وَقُودُهَا ٱلنَّاسُ وَٱلْحِجَارَةُ ۖ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَـٰفِرِينَ﴾

> "Then fear the Fire whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the disbelievers." [Al-Baqarah: 24]

And His Saying:

﴿يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ قُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا ٱلنَّاسُ وَٱلْحِجَارَةُ﴾

"O you who believe! Ward off from yourselves and your families a Fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones." [Al-Taḥrīm: 6]

Sometimes He commands with [*Taqwá*] fear of the Day of Resurrection, the Day of recompense, reckoning and happiness or misery: The Day when the pious [*Mutaqqūn*] will receive their reward and the criminals, who opposed *al-Taqwá*, will receive their torment and punishment, as He, the Most High, said:

﴿ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ يَوْمًا تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٨١﴾ ﴾

"And be afraid of the Day when you shall be brought back to Allāh. Then every person shall be paid what he earned, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly." [Al-Baqarah: 281]

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) would advise his companions with the *Taqwá* of Allāh. If he (ﷺ) dispatched an army he would advise its leader with the *Taqwá* of Allāh, as it related to him personally, and also to treat those with him well. When he (ﷺ) delivered the sermon on the Day of Sacrifice in the farewell sermon he advised the people with the *Taqwá* of Allāh, due to the people needing this advice and its great importance and benefit.

The *Salaf* attached significant importance to the actualization of *Taqwá* in their own selves, and they were committed to accurately explaining its meaning and its foundations. They continuously used to advise one another with *al-Taqwá*.

Ibn ʿAbbās (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) said:

> "The people who possess *Taqwá* [*Mutaqqūn*] are those who fear Allāh's punishment, [which is earned] by [those] who abandon what they know of true guidance, and they hope for Allāh's mercy, which is earned by affirmation and belief in what He revealed."

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

> "The people who possess *Taqwá* [*Mutaqqūn*] are those who protect themselves from what they have been forbidden, and they perform what has been made obligatory upon them."

ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

> "*Taqwá* of Allāh is not fasting during the day and standing in prayer at night, and then spoiling this [obedience with the disobedience]. Rather, *Taqwá* of Allāh is to abandon what Allāh has forbidden and to perform what He has made obligatory."

Ibn Masʿūd (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) said, explaining His Saying:

﴿ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِۦ وَلَا﴾

"Fear Allāh [i.e. have *Taqwá* of] Allāh as He should be feared." [Āl ʿImrān: 103]

"It is that He should be obeyed and not disobeyed, remembered and not forgotten, and thanked and not shown ingratitude."

Ṭalq b. Ḥabīb (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

"*Taqwá* is that you act in obedience to Allāh upon light from Allāh, hoping for the reward of Allāh; and that you abandon the disobedience of Allāh upon light from Allāh, fearing the punishment of Allāh."[1]

When a man said to 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ), "Fear Allāh," he responded by saying, "There is no good in you if you did not utter this, and there is no good in us if we do not accept it."

The place of *Taqwá* [piety] is the heart. Muslim related in his authentic collection a long *ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ), in it the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

التَّقْوَى هَاهُنَا وَيُشِيرُ إِلَى صَدْرِهِ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ

"Piety is here, and he pointed to his chest three times."[2]

Ibn Rajab (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

"Since the origin of piety is the heart, no one sees its reality except Allāh, as the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

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[1] Ibn Rajab mentioned these narrations in his book *Jāmi' al-'Ulūm Wa al-Ḥikam*, p. 296-297.

[2] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (no. 2564).

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَى صُوَرِكُمْ وَأَمْوَالِكُمْ، وَلَكِنْ يَنْظُرُ إِلَى قُلُوبِكُمْ وَأَعْمَالِكُمْ

'Verily, Allāh does not look at your appearances nor your wealth, but He looks at your hearts and actions.' Collected by Muslim from Abū Hurairah.

In another narration:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَى أَجْسَادِكُمْ وَلَا إِلَى صُوَرِكُمْ

'Verily, Allāh does not look at your appearances nor your bodies...'[1]

Hence, many times a person may have a beautiful appearance, wealth, position or leadership in this world, yet his heart is derelict and void of piety; whereas the one who has none of the above has a heart full of piety, and he is nobler before Allāh – and this occurs more often."[2]

Taqwá has numerous benefits and many fruits, which are reaped by the pious [*Mutaqqūn*]. From the fruits of piety in this life are:

- The attainment of beneficial knowledge. Allāh, the Most High said:

﴿وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ اللَّهُ﴾

"So be afraid of Allāh; and Allāh teaches you."
[Al-Baqarah: 282]

[1] Both narrations have been related by Muslim (no. 2564).

[2] *Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm Wa al-Ḥikam* of Ibn Rajab, p. 626.

He (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ) said:

﴿إِن تَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَّكُمْ فُرْقَانًا﴾

"If you fear Allāh, He will grant you *Furqān* [a criterion]" [Al-Anfāl: 29]

- An escape from trials and tests, and the attainment of beneficial sustenance by the servant from avenues he does not imagine. He, the Most High, said:

﴿وَمَن يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَّهُ مَخْرَجًا ۝ وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ ۚ وَمَن يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَالِغُ أَمْرِهِ ۚ قَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدْرًا ۝﴾

"And whosoever fears Allāh and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty). And He will provide him from (sources) he never could imagine. And whosoever puts his trust in Allāh, then He will suffice him. Verily, Allāh will accomplish his purpose. Indeed, Allāh has set a measure for all things." [Al-Ṭalāq: 2-3]

- They achieve the love of Allāh, His *Ma'iyyah* and His forgiveness, and with this they attain success and triumph.

He (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ) said:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ﴾

"Surely Allāh loves the pious [*Mutaqqūn*]."
[Al-Tawbah: 4]

He (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ) said:

﴿وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ﴾

"And know that Allāh is with the pious [*Mutaqqūn*]." [Al-Baqarah: 194]

He (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) said:

﴿وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ﴾

"Fear Allāh. Certainly, Allāh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." [Al-Anfāl: 69]

He, the Most High, said:

﴿وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ﴾

"And fear Allāh that you may be successful." [Al-Baqarah: 189]

The fruits of piety [*Taqwá*] in the Hereafter are numerous, from them are:

- The successful attainment of Paradise, nobility and a praiseworthy outcome for them.

Allāh, the Most High, said:

﴿ إِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّٰتِ ٱلنَّعِيمِ ﴿٣٤﴾ ﴾

"Verily, for the pious [*Mutaqqūn*] are Gardens of delight (Paradise) with their Lord." [Al-Qalam: 34]

He (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ) said:

﴿ وَٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوْا۟ فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يَرْزُقُ مَن يَشَآءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴾

"But those who fear Allāh are above them on the Day of Resurrection. And Allāh gives provision to whom He wills without account." [Al-Baqarah: 212]

He (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) said:

﴿ وَٱلْعَٰقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴾

"And the (blessed) end is for the pious [*Mutaqqūn*]."
[Al-Aʿrāf: 128]

- From the greatest of the fruits of *Taqwá* is meeting Allāh and seeing Him on the Day of Resurrection. He, the Most High, said:

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ فِى جَنَّٰتٍ وَنَهَرٍ ﴿٥٤﴾ فِى مَقْعَدِ صِدْقٍ عِندَ مَلِيكٍ مُّقْتَدِرٍۭ ﴿٥٥﴾ ﴾

> "Verily, the pious [*Mutaqqūn*], will be in the midst of Gardens and Rivers (Paradise). In a seat of truth (i.e. Paradise), near the Omnipotent King."
>
> [Al-Qamr: 54-55]

We ask Allāh, the Most Generous, the Lord of the magnificent throne, while we are in this splendid season and noble month, to beautify our hearts with the adornment of *Taqwá* and to make it a provision for us in this life and the Day we meet Him.

Lesson 12
Ramaḍān Is the Month of Patience

Patience is the fundamental basis of good character and [likewise it is a vital component] to free oneself of ignoble character.

It is to apprehend the soul [and compel it] to do that which is detests and the opposite of its desires, seeking the pleasure of Allāh and His reward. This encompasses patience upon the obedience of Allāh, patience in staying away from the disobedience of Allāh and patience in the face of the decrees of Allāh, which are distressful to the servant. These three categories cannot be completed – which cover the whole of the religion – except with patience.

Acts of obedience – specifically those difficult acts of obedience such as *Jihād* in the path of Allāh, continuous righteous deeds such as seeking knowledge and constant observance of beneficial statements and actions – cannot be performed except with patience and training the soul to be consistent, constant and persistent upon them. If this patience becomes weak, then so do these actions, and it is possible that they may cease [all together].

Similarly, refraining the soul from the disobedience of Allāh – especially the acts of disobedience which the soul has a strong desire for – is not possible except with patience and perseverance in opposing one's lusts and enduring the bitter taste of this.

When calamities befall the servant and he wants to encounter them with contentment, gratitude and the praise of Allāh, this is

not possible except with patience and anticipation of [Allāh's] reward. If the servant trains himself to be patient and accustoms his soul to endure hardships and calamities, and to be committed and dedicated to perfect this, then his outcome will be one of success and prosperity. It is rare for a person to strive in pursuit of something, and they have patience throughout, except that they successfully accomplish it.

The month of Ramaḍān is a great school and lofty castle from which the servants take many beneficial lessons and admonitions, which cultivate and reform the soul in this month and for the rest of its life. One of the things that the fasting people learn in this great month and blessed season is how to condition their soul and induce it to be patient.

This is why the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) described the month of Ramaḍān as the month of patience in more than one *ḥadīth*. An example of this is the *ḥadīth* related by Imām Aḥmad and Muslim from Abū Qatādah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said that the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

صَوْمُ شَهْرِ الصَّبْرِ وَثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ مِنْ كُلِّ شَهْرٍ صَوْمُ الدَّهْرِ

> "Fasting the month of patience and three days from each month is equivalent to fasting the whole year."[1]

Al-Imām Aḥmad collected a *ḥadīth* narrated by Yazīd b. 'Abdullah al-Shikhkhīr who stated that a Bedouin said that he heard the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) say:

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[1] *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad (no. 7567 & 8965) and Muslim (no. 1162). The wording is that related by Imām Aḥmad.

صَوْمُ شَهْرِ الصَّبْرِ وَثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ مِنْ كُلِّ شَهْرٍ يُذْهِبْنَ وَحَرَ الصَّدْرِ

"Fasting the month of patience and three days from every month eradicates the malice of the heart."[1]

Al-Nasā'ī related a *ḥadīth* narrated by al-Bāhilī (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

"Fast the month of patience and three days from each month…"[2]

In these three *ḥadīth* the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) described the month of Ramadan as the month of patience. This is because Ramaḍān comprises all the types of patience: patience upon the obedience of Allāh, patience in refraining from the disobedience of Allāh and patience upon the decrees of Allāh, which the servant finds distressful.

- In the month of Ramaḍān there is fasting, prayer, recitation of the Qur'ān, righteousness, piety, generosity, benevolence, feeding the poor, remembrance of Allāh, supplication, repentance, seeking forgiveness and other acts of obedience. They all require patience for a person to perform them in the best and most complete manner.

- In the month of Ramaḍān there is restraint of the tongue from lying, deceit, evil talk, abuse, insults, improper shouting, argumentation, backbiting, tale-carrying, and restraint of the

[1] *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad (no. 22965).

[2] *Sunan al-Nasā'ī* (no. 2756). Refer to *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi'* (no. 3794).

limbs from committing acts of disobedience. This occurs in Ramaḍān and outside of it. Staying away from these acts of disobedience requires patience, so that the servant can safeguard his soul from falling into them.

- In Ramaḍān [people] abstain from food, drink and that which their soul desires and yearns for. Similarly, curbing the soul from the desires that Allāh has permitted for it such as sexual relations and foreplay. The soul cannot do any of this except with patience.

Therefore, Ramadan comprises of all the types of patience. Ibn al-Qayyim (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

> "In the soul, there are two forces at work: a driving force and a restraining force. The essence of patience is to manipulate the driving force to push the individual towards what is beneficial for him and the restraining force to refrain him from that which is harmful. The strength of some people's patience, when it comes to doing what is beneficial for them and being steadfast upon it, is stronger than their patience in abstaining from that which is harmful to them. Thus, he has patience with the exertion required to perform acts of worship, but he has no patience in controlling the urges of his lusts when they incite him to perpetrate what he has been prohibited from. On the other hand, the strength of some people's patience in abstaining from forbidden matters is stronger than their patience with the exertion required to perform acts of worship. Some people have no patience in both cases. The best of the people are those most patient in both areas. Many

> people may have plenty of patience when it comes to standing at night in prayer, enduring the heat or cold, and with the difficulty of fasting, but have no patience when it comes to lowering their gaze from something forbidden. Many people can be patient in refraining from looking at that which is forbidden and unlawful images, but lack the patience required to enjoin the good and forbid the evil and engage in the struggle against the disbelievers and hypocrites. Rather, they are the weakest and the feeblest at this. Most of them have no patience in both these areas, and the minority are those who have patience in both."[1]

He (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) also said:

> "If a man's patience overcomes the urge of his whims and desires, then he is similar to the angels in this regard. If the urge of his whims and desires overcomes his patience, then he is similar to the devils in this regard. If the urge of his innate nature for food, drink and sexual relations overcomes his patience, then he is like an animal."[2]

Allāh has commanded with patience, praised the patient and informed us that for them is elevated stations and final destinations of honor and dignity in many verses in the Qur'ān, and He informed that they will receive their reward without reckoning.

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[1] *'Uddah al-Sābirīn Wa Dhakhīrah al-Shākirīn*, p. 37.

[2] *'Uddah al-Sābirīn Wa Dhakhīrah al-Shākirīn*, p. 37.

He, the Most High, said:

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱصْبِرُوا۟ وَصَابِرُوا۟ وَرَابِطُوا۟ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴾

"O you who believe! Endure and be more patient (than your enemy), and guard your territory by stationing army units permanently at the places from where the enemy can attack you, and fear Allāh, so that you may be successful." [Āl 'Imrān: 200]

He (سُبْحَانَهُۥ وَتَعَالَىٰ) said:

﴿ وَٱسْتَعِينُوا۟ بِٱلصَّبْرِ وَٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ﴾

"And seek help in patience and the prayer."
[Al-Baqarah: 45]

He, the Most High, said:

﴿ وَبَشِّرِ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ ﴿١٥٥﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ إِذَآ أَصَٰبَتْهُم مُّصِيبَةٌ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّآ إِلَيْهِ رَٰجِعُونَ ﴿١٥٦﴾ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَٰتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ ۖ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾ ﴾

"But give glad tidings to the patient. Who, when afflicted with calamity, say: 'Truly! To Allāh we belong and truly, to Him we shall return.' They are those on whom are the blessings from their Lord, and (they are those who) receive His Mercy, and it is they who are the guided-ones." [Al-Baqarah: 155-157]

He, the Most High, said:

﴿وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ﴾

"And who are patient in extreme poverty and ailment (disease) and at the time of fighting. Such are the people of the truth and they are *al-Mutaqqūn* (pious)."
[Al-Baqarah: 177]

He (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) said:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ﴾

"Verily, Allāh is with the patient." [Al-Baqarah: 153]

Allāh, the Most High, said concerning the reward for the patient and their recompense:

﴿إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُم بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ﴾

"Only those who are patient shall receive their rewards in full, without reckoning." [Al-Zumar: 10]

He (صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ) said:

"And whoever remains patient, Allāh will make him patient."[1]

[1] Bukhārī (no. 1469).

He (ﷺ) said:

"Verily, victory comes with patience."[1]

How exceptional for you is a characteristic that makes light the difficulty of the acts of obedience, makes easy the abandonment of sins that the soul desires and provides solace to the servant at times of calamities. It causes good mannerisms to flourish and serves like a foundation to a building.

When the servant knows the good in this life and the Hereafter, which results from acts of obedience, and the harms in this life and the Hereafter, which result from disobedience, and the amazing reward and great recompense for being patient in the face of calamities, then patience will be easier upon the soul; and it may yield to it and embrace its fruits.

If it is easy for the people of the *Dunyá* to be patient with the great difficulties necessary to attain the vanities of this world, then how is it not easy for the believing servant, whom has been granted success, to be patient upon what Allāh loves in order to obtain its benefits.

When the servant is patient for Allāh, sincere in his patience, then Allāh will be with him, for verily Allāh is with the patient, aiding them, granting them success, supporting them and gracing them with correctness.

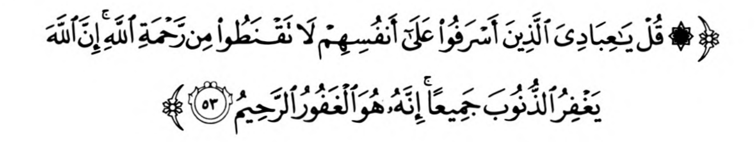
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[1] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad (no. 2666) and al-Ḥākim (no. 6304).

O Allāh, grant us success to stand in prayer this month, purify our hearts of malice and clothe us in the adornments of certainty and patience.

Lesson 13
Ramaḍān is the Month of Seeking Forgiveness

Allāh, the Most High, said:



> "Say: 'O My slaves who have transgressed against themselves (by committing evil deeds and sins)! Despair not of the Mercy of Allāh, verily Allāh forgives all sins. Truly, He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." [Al-Zumar: 53]

This verse clarifies the vastness of Allāh's mercy and kindness to His servants. In it is an address from Allāh, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of mercy, to the sinners and offenders who have committed the greatest of crimes and most heinous of them – this includes *Shirk*, disbelief and the major sins – to forsake these sins and seek the forgiveness of their Lord, the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful, as He forgives all sins. He deems no sin too great, ever, no matter how severe or major, if the perpetrator seeks His forgiveness and repents.

Al-Tirmidhī related a *ḥadīth* narrated by Anas b. Mālik (رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ) who said that he heard the Messenger of Allāh say:

قَالَ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى: يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ إِنَّكَ مَا دَعَوْتَنِي وَرَجَوْتَنِي غَفَرْتُ لَكَ عَلَى مَا كَانَ فِيكَ وَلَا أُبَالِي، يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ لَوْ بَلَغَتْ ذُنُوبُكَ عَنَانَ السَّمَاءِ ثُمَّ اسْتَغْفَرْتَنِي غَفَرْتُ لَكَ وَلَا أُبَالِي ، يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ إِنَّكَ لَوْ أَتَيْتَنِي بِقُرَابِ الْأَرْضِ خَطَايَا ثُمَّ لَقِيتَنِي لَا تُشْرِكُ بِي شَيْئًا لَأَتَيْتُكَ بِقُرَابِهَا مَغْفِرَةً

"Allāh, the Blessed and Most High, said, 'O son of Adam, if you call upon Me and place your hope in Me, I will forgive you, and I do not mind. O son of Adam, were your sins to pile up to the clouds and then you ask for My forgiveness, I will forgive you, and I do not mind. O son of Adam, if you came to me with an earth full of sins, and you met me without associating partners with Me, I will come to you with enough forgiveness to fill the earth.'"[1]

Allāh commanded His servants in the Qur'ān to seek His forgiveness, He said:

﴿ وَٱسْتَغْفِرُواْ ٱللَّهَۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٞ رَّحِيمُۢ ﴾

"And seek Forgiveness of Allāh. Verily, Allāh is Oft-Forgiving, Most-Merciful." [Al-Muzammil: 20]

And He, the Most High, said:

﴿ وَأَنِ ٱسْتَغْفِرُواْ رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوبُوٓاْ إِلَيْهِ ﴾

[1] *Sunan al-Tirmidhī* (no. 3540).

> "Seek the forgiveness of your Lord, and turn to Him in repentance." [Hūd: 3]

He (سُبْحَانَهُۥ وَتَعَالَىٰ) clarified that He forgives those who ask for His forgiveness:

﴿ وَمَن يَعْمَلْ سُوٓءًا أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُۥ ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرِ ٱللَّهَ يَجِدِ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿١١٠﴾ ﴾

> "And whoever does evil or wrongs himself but afterwards seeks Allāh's Forgiveness, he will find Allāh Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." [Al-Nisā: 110]

He also praised His servants who seek His forgiveness:

﴿ وَبِٱلْأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ ﴾

> "And in the hours before dawn, they were (found) asking (Allāh) for forgiveness." [Al-Dhāriyāt: 18]

Similarly, from his guidance (صَلَّىٰ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) was to frequently ask for Allāh's forgiveness:

إِنِّي لَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ فِي الْيَوْمِ مِائَةَ مَرَّةٍ

> "I seek Allāh's forgiveness one hundred times in a day."[1]

[1] Collected by Muslim (no. 2702).

In another *ḥadīth*:

أَكْثَرَ مِنْ سَبْعِينَ مَرَّةً

"More than seventy times in a day."[1]

The month of Ramaḍān has an added singularity as it relates to the forgiveness of sins and wiping away of evil deeds. The happy person is the one who reaches the month of Ramaḍān and he spends its nights and days in the obedience of Allāh and doing that which pleases Him, so due to this he is deserving of the forgiveness and pleasure of the King, the One Who Recompenses.

The miserable, deprived person is the one who reaches this magnificent month and he does not do righteous deeds, which elevate him, he fails to repent from his sins, which destroy and humiliate him, he wastes this month and its days and nights in that which angers Allāh and that which will ruin him, and he did not turn to Allāh, seeking His forgiveness for his sins and evil actions. He remains in [this state of] transgression and aversion until the month of forgiveness departs.

Ṭabarānī related in his *Muʿjam* [a *ḥadīth*] narrated by Jābir b, Samurah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

أَتَانِي جِبْرِيلُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فَقَالَ: يَا مُحَمَّدُ مَنْ أَدْرَكَ أَحَدَ وَالِدَيْهِ فَمَاتَ، فَدَخَلَ النَّارَ فَأَبْعَدَهُ اللَّهُ، فَقُلْ: آمِينَ. قُلْتُ: آمِينَ ". قَالَ:" يَا مُحَمَّدُ،

[1] Collected by al-Bukhārī (no. 6307).

مَنْ أَدْرَكَ شَهْرَ رَمَضَانَ فَمَاتَ، فَلَمْ يُغْفَرْ لَهُ فَأُدْخِلَ النَّارَ فَأَبْعَدَهُ اللَّهُ،
قُلْ: آمِينَ فَقُلْتُ: آمِينَ ". قَالَ:" وَمَنْ ذُكِرْتَ عِنْدَهُ فَلَمْ يُصَلِّ عَلَيْكَ،
فَمَاتَ فَدَخَلَ النَّارَ فَأَبْعَدَهُ اللَّهُ. قُلْ: آمِينَ فَقُلْتُ: آمِينَ."

"Jibrīl (peace be upon him) came to me and said, 'O Muḥammad! Whoever lives to see one of his parents (become old), and he dies and goes to the Fire, may Allāh distance him! Say, '*Amīn.*' So I said, '*Amīn.*' He said, 'O Muḥammad! Whoever reaches the month of Ramaḍān, then dies and is not forgiven and is made to enter the Fire, then may Allāh distance him! Say, '*Amīn.*' So I said: '*Amī*n.' He said, 'Whoever you have been mentioned in his presence and he does not send *Ṣalāh* upon you, and then he dies and goes to the Fire, then may Allāh distance him! Say, '*Amīn.*' So I said: '*Amīn.*'"[1]

Al-Tirmidhī related [a *ḥadīth*] from Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) from the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) that he said:

رَغِمَ أَنْفُ رَجُلٍ ذُكِرْتُ عِنْدَهُ فَلَمْ يُصَلِّ عَلَيَّ، وَرَغِمَ أَنْفُ رَجُلٍ دَخَلَ عَلَيْهِ
رَمَضَانُ ثُمَّ انْسَلَخَ قَبْلَ أَنْ يُغْفَرَ لَهُ، وَرَغِمَ أَنْفُ رَجُلٍ أَدْرَكَ عِنْدَهُ أَبَوَاهُ
الْكِبَرَ فَلَمْ يُدْخِلَاهُ الْجَنَّةَ

"May the man in whose presence I am mentioned and he does not send *Ṣalāh* upon me be humiliated, may the man whom Ramaḍān has reached and then it departs before he is forgiven be humiliated, and may the man

[1] *Al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr* of al-Ṭabarānī (no. 2022).

> whose parents reach old age in his presence and they were not a cause for him to enter Paradise be humiliated."[1]

It is befitting the believing servant to seize the good deeds of this month and its blessings. To continuously seek forgiveness and do this often, so that he can gain its blessed benefits and splendid merits, and they are many and cannot be counted, in this life and the Hereafter.

From the worldly benefits of asking Allāh's forgiveness is what is found in His Saying:

﴿ فَقُلْتُ ٱسْتَغْفِرُوا۟ رَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ غَفَّارًا ﴿١٠﴾ يُرْسِلِ ٱلسَّمَآءَ عَلَيْكُم مِّدْرَارًا ﴿١١﴾ وَيُمْدِدْكُم بِأَمْوَٰلٍ وَبَنِينَ وَيَجْعَل لَّكُمْ جَنَّـٰتٍ وَيَجْعَل لَّكُمْ أَنْهَـٰرًا ﴿١٢﴾ ﴾

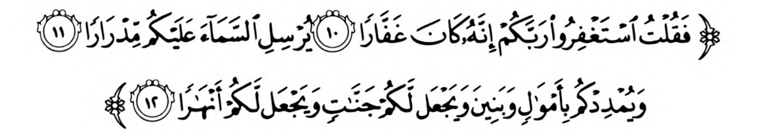
> "I said (to them): 'Ask forgiveness from your Lord; Verily, He is Oft-Forgiving. He will send rain to you in abundance. And give you increase in wealth and children, and bestow on you gardens and give you rivers.'" [Nūḥ: 10-12]

There comes in a narration conveyed from al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ):

> "That a man complained to him concerning drought, so he said, 'Seek forgiveness from Allāh.' Another complained about poverty, so he said, 'Seek forgiveness from Allāh. Another complained about the lack of rain for his land, so he said, 'Seek forgiveness from Allāh.

[1] *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī* (no. 3545) and *Mustadrak* of al-Ḥākim (no. 2016).

Another complained of no offspring, so he said, 'Seek forgiveness from Allāh.' Then he recited:



'I said (to them): 'Ask forgiveness from your Lord; Verily, He is Oft-Forgiving. He will send rain to you in abundance. And give you increase in wealth and children, and bestow on you gardens and give you rivers." [Nūḥ: 10-12]"

This means that if you repent to Allāh, seek His forgiveness and obey Him, then He will increase your provisions, provide you with water from the blessings of the sky, give you agriculture from the blessings of the land, cause to grow from the earth all types of vegetation, cause the milk to flow abundantly, and give you an increase in wealth and children; meaning that he will grant you both wealth and children. He will give you gardens of Paradise with all types of fruits therein and He will make rivers flow among these gardens."[1]

These fruits mentioned here are those wide-ranging blessings, noble gifts and numerous benefits that the servant acquires in the life of this world as a recompense for seeking Allāh's forgiveness.

As for the amazing recompense, great reward, mercy, forgiveness, liberation from the Fire and safety from the

[1] *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*: Surah Nūḥ (8/233).

punishment that those who ask Allāh's forgiveness will receive on the Day of Resurrection, then this is an affair that only Allāh knows the true extent of. Ibn Mājah related a *ḥadīth* in his *Sunan* narrated by ʿAbdullah b. Busr (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

طُوبَى لِمَنْ وَجَدَ فِي صَحِيفَتِهِ اسْتِغْفَارًا كَثِيرًا

> "*Ṭūba* [a tree in Paradise] for the one who finds a large amount of seeking Allāh's forgiveness [recorded] in his scrolls."[1] Its chain of narration is *Ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic).

Al-Ṭabarānī related in *al-Awsaṭ* and al-Diyā in *al-Aḥādīth al-Mukhtārah* a *ḥadīth* narrated by al-Zubayr b. al-ʿAwwām (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said that the Messenger of Allāh said:

مَنْ أَحَبَّ أَنْ تَسُرَّهُ صَحِيفَتُهُ فَلْيُكْثِرْ فِيهَا مِنَ الاسْتِغْفَارِ

> "Whoever wants to be delighted by their scrolls, then let them seek much forgiveness from Allāh."[2]

It must be known here that the meaning of seeking Allāh's forgiveness is that which is coupled to not persisting [upon that sin], and with this it is sincere repentance that wipes away what preceded it. This is the *Istighfār* [seeking Allāh's forgiveness] that Allāh has ordered with and for which He rewards them with forgiveness.

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[1] *Sunan Ibn Mājah* (no. 3818).

[2] *Al-Muʿjam al-Awsaṭ* of al-Ṭabarānī (no. 839) and *Shuʿab al-Īmān* of al-Bayhaqī (no. 639).

He, the Most High, said:

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا لِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَن يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَلَمْ يُصِرُّوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلُوا وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣٥﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ جَزَاؤُهُم مَّغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَجَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ ﴿١٣٦﴾ ﴾

> "And those who, when they have committed immoral deeds or wronged themselves with evil, remember Allāh and ask forgiveness for their sins, and none can forgive sins but Allāh; and do not persist in what (wrong) they have done, while they know. For such, the reward is Forgiveness from their Lord, and Gardens with rivers flowing underneath (Paradise), wherein they shall abide forever. How excellent is this reward for the doers!" [Āl 'Imrān: 135-136]

There are three major reasons for forgiveness, which are all present in the previous *ḥadīth* narrated by Anas.

1. That the servant, if he was to commit a sin, only hopes for forgiveness from his Lord, and he knows that none forgives sins nor punishes because of them except Him. There comes in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* a hadith where the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

   "A servant committed a sin and said, 'O Allāh, forgive me my sin." He, the Blessed and Exalted, said, 'My servant has committed a sin, but he knows that he has a Lord Who forgives sin and punishes for sin.' Then he sinned again and

said, 'O my Lord, forgive me my sin.' He, the Blessed and Exalted, said, 'My servant has committed a sin, but he knows that he has a Lord Who forgives sin and punishes for sin.' Then he sinned again and said, 'O my Lord, forgive me my sin.' He, the Blessed and Exalted, said, 'My servant has committed a sin, but he knows that he has a Lord Who forgives sin and punishes for sin. Do what you want, for I have forgiven you." The narrator 'Abd al-'Ala said, 'I do not know if he mentioned after the third or fourth time the statement, 'Do what you want, for I have forgiven you."

In one narration: "I have forgiven my servant, so he may do as he wishes."[1]

2. Seeking forgiveness, even if the sins are great and they reach the limits of the sky, which is the clouds. This has also been explained to mean the furthest distance that the eye can see. In another narration:

   "By Him in Whose Hand is the soul of Muḥammad, if you sinned until your sins filled what is between the heavens and the earth, then you sought forgiveness from Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ), He would forgive you."[2]

   Istighfār is to seek forgiveness, and forgiveness is protection from the evil consequences of sins along with their concealment.

   If *Istighfār* is mentioned together with *Tawbah* (repentance), then in this context *Istighfār* is a word that

[1] Collected by Muslim (no. 2758).
[2] *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad (no. 13427).

refers to seeking forgiveness with the tongue and *Tawbah* is a word that refers to the abandonment of sins with both the heart and limbs.

3. *Tawḥīd*, which is the greatest reason [for forgiveness]. Whoever does not have this will be deprived of forgiveness; and whoever comes with this has come with the greatest means to achieve forgiveness.

   Allāh, the Most High, said:

   ﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَن يُشْرَكَ بِهِۦ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ ﴾

   > "Verily, Allāh forgives not that partners should be set up with him in worship, but He forgives except that (anything else) to whom He pleases." [Al-Nisā: 48]

O Allāh, forgive all our sins, the minor and the major, those we are aware of and those we are not; and make our final actions righteous deeds.

Lesson 14
Ramaḍān the Month of Repentance and Forgiveness

This magnificent season and noble month is a season of mercy, which is [a gift] from Allāh to the servants, so that the offenses can be pardoned, the slips can be forgiven and [the individual] can repent from his sins and evil deeds.

How merciful is He, and How forbearing, that He presented His servants with everything they need to bring them closer to Him and return them to Him! He commanded His believing servants with an absolute command to sincerely repent at all moments and times, so that their sins can be wiped away, their offenses can be pardoned, their ranks can be raised, and so that they can earn the gardens of Paradise.

He (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ) said:

﴿يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ تُوبُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ تَوْبَةً نَّصُوحًا عَسَىٰ رَبُّكُمْ أَن يُكَفِّرَ عَنكُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ وَيُدْخِلَكُمْ جَنَّـٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَـٰرُ﴾

> "O you who believe! Turn to Allāh with sincere repentance! It may be that your Lord will remit from you your sins, and admit you into Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise)." [Al-Taḥrīm: 8]

And He (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ) said:

﴿ وَتُوبُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴾

> "And all of you beg Allāh to forgive you, O believers, that you may be successful." [Al-Nūr: 31]

Muslim related in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* that the Messenger (ﷺ) said:

> "Verily, I ask for Allāh's forgiveness a hundred times in a day."[1]

Allāh is more delighted when His servant repents to Him. Muslim related in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* a *ḥadīth* narrated by Anas (رضي الله عنه) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

لَلَّهُ أَشَدُّ فَرَحًا بِتَوْبَةِ عَبْدِهِ حِينَ يَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ أَحَدِكُمْ كَانَ عَلَى رَاحِلَتِهِ بِأَرْضِ فَلَاةٍ فَانْفَلَتَتْ مِنْهُ وَعَلَيْهَا طَعَامُهُ وَشَرَابُهُ فَأَيِسَ مِنْهَا فَأَتَى شَجَرَةً فَاضْطَجَعَ فِي ظِلِّهَا قَدْ أَيِسَ مِنْ رَاحِلَتِهِ، فَبَيْنَا هُوَ كَذَلِكَ إِذَا هُوَ بِهَا قَائِمَةً عِنْدَهُ فَأَخَذَ بِخِطَامِهَا ثُمَّ قَالَ مِنْ شِدَّةِ الْفَرَحِ : اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ عَبْدِي وَأَنَا رَبُّكَ ، أَخْطَأَ مِنْ شِدَّةِ الْفَرَحِ

> "Verily, Allāh is more delighted with the repentance of His slave when he repents to Him than one of you who is upon his camel in a waterless desert, and it gets away carrying his provisions of food and drink. He loses hope of [getting] it [back], so he goes to a tree and lies down in its shade, and he has lost hope of recovering it. While he is in this state, unexpectedly he finds the camel

[1] Collected by Muslim (no. 2702).

> standing before him. He takes hold of its reins and then out of extreme delight says: 'O Allāh, You are my slave and I am Your Lord'. He made this mistake out of extreme delight."[1]

It is mandatory for the Muslim to realize the importance of repentance and his dire need of it, and to understand the danger of sins and their severe harms to those who commit them in this life and the Hereafter. Sins are a reason for descent of calamities, punishments and catastrophes. He, the Most High, said:

﴿ وَمَآ أَصَٰبَكُم مِّن مُّصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتۡ أَيۡدِيكُمۡ وَيَعۡفُواْ عَن كَثِيرٖ ٣٠ ﴾

> "And whatever of misfortune befalls you, it is because of what your hands have earned. And He pardons much." [Al-Shūra: 30]

He (سُبۡحَانَهُۥ وَتَعَالَىٰ) said:

﴿ فَلۡيَحۡذَرِ ٱلَّذِينَ يُخَالِفُونَ عَنۡ أَمۡرِهِۦٓ أَن تُصِيبَهُمۡ فِتۡنَةٌ أَوۡ يُصِيبَهُمۡ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴾

> "And let those who oppose the Messenger's commandment beware, lest some *Fitnah* befall them or a painful torment be inflicted on them." [Al-Nūr: 63]

He (سُبۡحَانَهُۥ وَتَعَالَىٰ) said:

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[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (no. 2747).

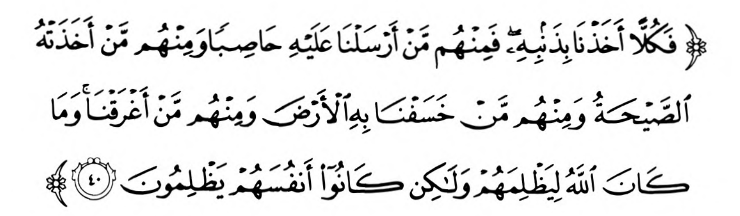
﴿وَلَا يَزَالُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ تُصِيبُهُم بِمَا صَنَعُوا۟ قَارِعَةٌ أَوْ تَحُلُّ قَرِيبًا مِّن دَارِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِىَ وَعْدُ ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ ٱلْمِيعَادَ ﴿٣١﴾﴾

> "And a disaster will not cease to strike those who disbelieve because of their (evil) deeds or it (i.e. the disaster) settle close to their homes, until the Promise of Allāh comes to pass. Certainly, Allāh does not fail in His Promise." [Al-Raʿd: 31]

Is there any evil or a sickness except that the reason for this is sins and disobedience?

What caused the people on earth to drown, until the water reached as high as the peaks of the mountains? What caused the people of ʿĀd to be afflicted with a furious, violent wind that left them lying dead on the earth like they were hollow trunks of date-palm trees? What caused Thamūd to be seized with a loud awful cry that severed their hearts from the inside? What caused the towns of the people of Lūṭ to be turned upside down and then pelted with stones of baked clay? What caused Firʿawn and his people to drown in the sea? What caused Qārūn, his house, property and family, to be swallowed by the earth? What caused a militarily superior people to be sent against the Children of Isrāʾīl, who entered the innermost parts of their homes, and then they were sent a second time and destroyed with utter destruction all that fell into their hands? The sole reason for all of this was sins and disobedience.

He, the Most High, said:



> "So each We seized for his sin; and among them were those upon whom We sent a storm of stones, and among them were those who were seized by the blast [from the sky], and among them were those whom We caused the earth to swallow, and among them were those whom We drowned. And Allāh would not have wronged them, but it was they who were wronging themselves." [Al-ʿAnkabūt: 40]

He (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ) said:

﴿مِّمَّا خَطِيٓـَٰٔتِهِمۡ أُغۡرِقُواْ فَأُدۡخِلُواْ نَارٗا فَلَمۡ يَجِدُواْ لَهُم مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَنصَارٗا ٢٥﴾

> "Because of their sins they were drowned, then were made to enter the Fire, and they found none to help them instead of Allāh." [Al-Nūḥ: 25]

Ibn al-Qayyim (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) stated in a profound passage of his, when explaining some of the dangerous consequence of sins, their great harms and disastrous results:

> "The earth trembled, the skies darkened and evil has appeared on land and sea because of the transgressions of the wicked. Blessings have vanished, the amount of good has lessened, the beasts have become feeble and life has become

turbid because of the rebelliousness of the transgressors. The light of the day and the darkness of the night cry because of the heinous deeds and repugnant actions. The honorable scribes from the angels and the angels who come to man in succession complained to their Lord because of the abundance of immorality and the prevalence of evil deeds and abominations. This – by Allāh – is a warning of a torrent of torment, whose clouds have amassed, and a declaration of a night of afflictions, whose night has become deeply black. Therefore, keep away from traversing on this path through sincere repentance, as long as repentance is still possible and its door is open. It is as if you are approaching the door and it is about to close, close to falling into a situation from which you cannot hope to escape and the sin is about to stick [to the individual].

﴿وَسَيَعْلَمُ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوٓا۟ أَىَّ مُنقَلَبٍ يَنقَلِبُونَ﴾

"And those who have wronged are going to know to what [kind of] return they will be returned." (Al-Shuʿarā: 227)

Purchase yourselves today, as the market places are still open, the amount is present and the goods are cheap. There will come a day for this market place and goods when there is no commerce [and they are unattainable].

﴿ذَٰلِكَ يَوْمُ ٱلتَّغَابُنِ﴾

"That will be the Day of mutual gain and loss." [Al-Taghābun: 9]

﴿ وَيَوْمَ يَعَضُّ ٱلظَّالِمُ عَلَىٰ يَدَيْهِ ﴾

> "And (remember) the Day when the wrong-doer will bite on his hands." [Al-Furqan: 27]"[1]

This is the reality, yet many people have been overwhelmed by distractions, temptations and amusements, and these things have become an obstacle and stumbling block [in the way] of repentance and returning to Allāh.

In the morning and in the evening, he is in [a state of] luxury and opulence, extravagance and wastefulness, amusement and sleeplessness, sleep and laziness, and oppression, wickedness and transgression.

The month of Ramaḍān is an opportunity for these heedless individuals to sincerely repent to Allāh and turn to Him. If the soul does not yearn to repent in this magnificent month, then when will it yearn for this? If the servant does not turn to Allāh in this blessed month, then when will He turn to Him?

Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic, has opened the door of repentance for His servants and promised them that He will accept it. He, the Most High, said:

﴿ وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى يَقْبَلُ ٱلتَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهِۦ وَيَعْفُوا۟ عَنِ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾ ﴾

> "And He it is Who accepts repentance from His slaves, and forgives sins, and He knows what you do." [Al-Shūra: 25]

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[1] *Al-Fawā'id*, p. 65-66.

He (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

> "Indeed, Allāh stretches out His Hand in the night so that the sinners of the day may repent, and He stretches out His Hand in the daytime so that the sinners of the night may repent, until the sun rises from the west."[1]

Let the negligent and the listless seize the chance in the month of forgiveness and repentance through sincere repentance, which fulfils all its conditions.

The conditions of repentance are three, and if one is missing it is not correct:

1. To totally forsake that act of disobedience. The sign of this is to totally abandon the sin.

2. Showing remorse for committing the sin. The sign of this is significant sorrow at what transpired.

3. Resoluteness to never return to this act of disobedience ever. The sign of this is to remedy what has passed and to rectify what is coming.

If the act of disobedience involves a right of a human being, then a fourth condition is stipulated, which is for the individual to free himself before Allāh of this right by returning it to its rightful owner or by asking the owner to absolve him of this right.

O Allāh, we have surely wronged ourselves greatly, and none forgives sins save You, so forgive us with forgiveness from

[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (no. 2759).

Yourself, and accept our repentance. Verily, You are the One Who accepts repentance, the Most Merciful.

Lesson 15
The Significance of the Prayer in Ramaḍān

It is authentically established in the two *Ṣaḥīḥs* [Bukhārī and Muslim] on the authority of ʿAbdullah b. ʿUmar (رضي الله عنه) who said:

> "I heard the Messenger of Allāh say, 'Islām is built upon five: The testimony that none has the right to be worshipped in truth except Allāh and that Muḥammad is His slave and Messenger, the establishment of the prayer, giving *Zakāh*, *Hajj* of the House and fasting Ramaḍān."[1]

It is compulsory for us – while we are in the month of fasting – to talk about a very important and great subject, and it is not less important than fasting; rather, it surpasses fasting in station and level. Verily, the prayer is from the greatest obligations and most important compulsory religious duties that Allāh has made obligatory upon His servants.

It is the support of the religion and the most crucial of its pillars after the two testimonies. It is the relationship between the servant and his Lord and it is the first thing that the servant will be brought to account for on the Day of Resurrection. If it is sound and correct, then the rest of his actions will be sound and correct, and if it is corrupt, then the rest of his actions will be corrupt. It is the distinguishing factor between belief and

[1] *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* (no. 8) and Muslim (no. 16). The wording is that related by Muslim.

disbelief. Its performance is faith and its abandonment is disbelief, misguidance and disobedience.

There is no religion remaining for the one who has no prayer, and the one who abandons the prayer has no portion of Islām. Whoever safeguards the prayer, it will be light in his heart, on his face, in his grave and when he is resurrected, and it will be safety and security for him on the Day of Resurrection. He will be resurrected with those whom Allāh has blessed from the Prophets, the truthful, the martyrs and the righteous, and these are the best companions. Whoever does not safeguard the prayer, then they will have no light, proof, safety or security on the Day of Resurrection, and they will be resurrected with Firʿawn, Hāmān, Qārūn and Ubayy b. Khalaf.

"Imām Aḥmad (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said, 'There comes in the *ḥadīth*:

> 'There is no share in Islām for the one who abandons the prayer.' Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) used to write to the different regions, 'The most important of your affairs is the prayer. Whoever safeguards it, will safeguard his religion; and whoever neglects it, will neglect other [aspects of the religion] more. There is no share in Islām for the one who abandons the prayer.'

Whoever attaches no importance to the prayer, then he attaches no importance to Islām, and considers it insignificant. His share in Islām depends upon his share of the prayer, and his passion for Islām depends upon his passion for the prayer. Know yourself – O servant of Allāh – and beware of meeting Allāh while Islām has no value to you. For the significance of Islām in your heart depends on the significance of the prayer in your heart.

There comes in the *ḥadīth* from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said:

> 'The prayer is the support of the religion.'

Are you unaware that if the support of the large tent [made of haircloth] collapses, then the tent itself will collapse, and the tent ropes and pegs will be of no benefit. Conversely, if the support is firm, then the tent rope and pegs will be of benefit. This is the example of the prayer to Islām.

There comes in the *ḥadīth*:

> 'The first thing that the servant will be questioned about on the Day of Resurrection from his actions is his prayer. If his prayer is accepted, then the rest of his actions will be accepted; and if his prayer is rejected, then the rest of his actions will be rejected.'

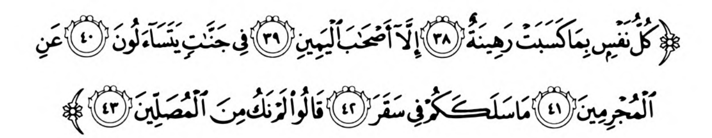
The prayer is the last part of the religion and it is the first thing of our actions that we will be questioned about tomorrow on the Day of Resurrection. Therefore, there is no Islām once the prayer is lost nor is there any religion, if the prayer is the last part of the religion to be lost."[1]

Abandoning and neglecting the prayer is a very dangerous matter and not trivial. What follows is a concise collection of some of the texts, which highlight the importance of the prayer:

Allāh, the Most High, said:

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[1] *Ḥukm Tārik al-Ṣalāh* of Ibn al-Qayyim, p. 9.



> "Every person is a pledge for what he has earned, except those on the Right. In Gardens (Paradise) they will ask one another about the criminals. (And they will say to them), 'What has caused you to enter Hell?' They will say, 'We were not of those who used to offer their prayer.'" [Al-Mudaththir: 38-43]

So, He (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) informed that those who abandon the prayer are from the criminals who will reside in *Saqar*, which is a valley in Hell. He, the Most High, said:

﴿ ۞ فَخَلَفَ مِنۢ بَعۡدِهِمۡ خَلۡفٌ أَضَاعُواْ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَٱتَّبَعُواْ ٱلشَّهَوَٰتِۖ فَسَوۡفَ يَلۡقَوۡنَ غَيًّا ٥٩ ﴾

> "Then, there has succeeded them later generations who have given up the prayer and have followed lusts. So they will be thrown in Hell [*Ghayy*]." [Maryam: 59]

It has been transmitted from Ibn Mas'ūd that *Ghayy* is referring to a river in Hell, which has a vulgar taste and is very deep. How great a calamity this is for the one who meets it, and how severe a pain for the one who enters it.

He, the Most High, said:

﴿فَإِن تَابُوا۟ وَأَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَوُا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ فَإِخْوَٰنُكُمْ فِى ٱلدِّينِ ۗ
وَنُفَصِّلُ ٱلْـَٔايَـٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١١﴾﴾

> "But if they repent, perform the prayer and give *Zakāh*, then they are your brethren in religion. (In this way) We explain the *Āyāt* (proofs and verses) in detail for a people who know." [Al-Tawbah: 11]

Allāh made their brotherhood dependent upon the performance of the prayer, so this proves that those who do not perform it are not their brethren.

He (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ) said:

﴿وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ ٱرْكَعُوا۟ لَا يَرْكَعُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾﴾

> "And when it is said to them: "Bow down yourself (in prayer)!" They bow not down (offer not their prayers)." [Al-Mursalāt: 48]

He mentioned this after His Saying:

﴿وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ ٱرْكَعُوا۟ لَا يَرْكَعُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾﴾

> "O you disbelievers)! Eat and enjoy yourselves (in this worldly life) for a little while. Verily, you are the criminals." [Al-Mursalāt: 48]

As for the *aḥādīth* pertaining to this, then they are numerous:

From them is the *ḥadīth* related by Muslim in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* which is narrated by Jābir (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said that the Messenger of Allāh said:

> "Between a man and *Shirk* and disbelief is the abandonment of the prayer."[1]

Aḥmad related and similarly the compilers of the *Sunan* a *ḥadīth* with an authentic chain of narration that was narrated by Yazīd b. Ḥabīb al-Aslamī (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said:

> "I heard the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) say, 'The covenant between us and them is the prayer. Whoever abandons it has disbelieved.'"[2]

Imām Aḥmad related a *ḥadīth* with a sound chain which was narrated by ʿAbdullah b. ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said that the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) mentioned the prayer one day and said:

> "Whosoever guards it, then it will be light, an authoritative proof and a means of salvation for him on the Day of Resurrection. Whosoever does not guard it, then it will not be light for him, nor an authoritative proof nor a means of salvation. On the Day of

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[1] Muslim (no. 82).

[2] *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad (no. 22833), *Sunan al-Tirmidhī* (no. 2621), al-Nasāʾī (no. 463) and Ibn Mājah (no. 1079).

Resurrection, he will be in the company of Firʿawn, Hāmān, Qārūn and Ubayy b. Khalaf."[1]

Bukhārī related a *ḥadīth* narrated by Anas b. Mālik (رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ) said:

> "Whoever says, 'None has the right to be worshipped in truth but Allāh,' faces our *Qiblah*, prays our prayer and eats our slaughtered animals, then he is a Muslim. He is afforded the same rights as any other Muslim and upon him are rights which are upon every Muslim."[2]

Aḥmad, Mālik and al-Nasāʾī related a *ḥadīth* with an authentic chain narrated by Miḥjan al-Aslamī (رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ):

> "That he was in a gathering with the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ) when the *Adhān* was called for the prayer. The Messenger of Allāh got up, and then he returned, and Miḥjan was still sitting in his place. The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ) said to him, 'What prevented you from praying, are you not a Muslim man?' He said, 'Yes, but I already prayed.' The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ) said to him, 'When you come, pray with the people, even if you have already prayed.'"[3]

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[1] *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad (no. 6576: [2/169]). Aḥmad Shākir declared it to be *Ṣaḥīḥ* [authentic].

[2] *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* (no. 393).

[3] *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad (no. 16347), *Muwaṭṭa* of al-Imām Mālik (no. 293) and *Sunan al-Nasāʾī* (no. 857).

Many narrations have been conveyed from the companions with a similar meaning. From them:

That which has come from Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said:

> "There is no share in Islām for the one who abandons the prayer."[1]

He said this in the presence of the Companions and none of them rejected this from him. In fact, a number of the Companions stated something similar such as Mu'ādh b. Jabal, 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Awf, Abū Hurairah, Abdullah b. Mas'ūd and others.

Muslim related from Ibn Mas'ūd (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) that he said:

> "Whoever would like to meet Allāh tomorrow as a Muslim, let him preserve these prayers whenever the call for them is made. For indeed, Allāh prescribed for your Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) the ways of guidance, and they (the prayers) are part of those ways of guidance. If you were to pray in your homes, like the one who stays away from the Masjid, and forsake the Masjid you would be forsaking the Sunnah of your Prophet. If you were to forsake the Sunnah of your Prophet you will go astray. There is no Muslim slave who performs *Wuḍū* correctly then walks to the prayer, but Allāh will record a good deed for each step he takes, raise him a degree due to it and erase a sin from him. I remember [a time]

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[1] *Muwaṭṭa* of al-Imām Mālik (no. 74), Sunan al-Bayhaqī (no. 6291), Muṣannaf Abd al-Razzāq (3/125) and Muṣannaf Ibn Abū Shaybah (8/581).

> when no one stayed away from the prayer except a hypocrite whose hypocrisy was well-known, and a man would come supported by two others until he could stand in the row."[1]

If this was the condition of the individual who did not attend the prayer in congregation – that the companions considered him a hypocrite whose hypocrisy was well-known – then what about the one who abandons it?

We ask Allāh for wellbeing!

There are numerous other texts concerning the excellence of preserving the prayer and the severe punishment for the one who neglects them, yet this is not the place to further elaborate upon them.

However, it is still noticed from some of those who observe the fast that they neglect the prayer and show a lack of concern for it, by either delaying it past its time or by abandoning some of the prayers while having concern and attaching importance to the fast. Do these individuals not understand the elevated place of the prayer and its importance? Do they not find in this school of fasting that which leads them to the preservation of the prayer and the actualization of piety?

Some of them have a flawed understanding – and have totally missed the mark – of the meaning of the Prophet's (صَلَّىٰ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) saying:

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[1] Muslim (no. 654).

مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ

> "Whoever fasts the month of Ramaḍān, truthfully out of sincere faith and hoping to attain Allāh's reward, all of his past sins will be forgiven."

As they erroneously believe that fasting alone is sufficient to achieve forgiveness, so they rely upon it and abandon the prayer. What an awful understanding, and how far this is from the truth and guidance!

Where is this understanding from the abundant texts that encourage the performance of the prayer [through mentioning its reward] and frighten [those who neglect it by mentioning its punishment]? Some of these texts have already been quoted.

There comes a *ḥadīth* in *Ṣaḥīḥ* Muslim narrated by Abū Hurairah who said that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

> "The five daily prayers, *Jum'ah* to *Jum'ah*, and Ramaḍān to Ramaḍān are an expiation for what is between them, as long as the major sins are avoided."

The abandonment of the prayer is a major sin – rather, the previous cited texts establish that it is disbelief – and the prayer is the first thing from the actions of the servant that he will be questioned about. If it is accepted then the rest of his actions will be accepted and if it is rejected then the rest of his actions will be rejected.

We ask Allāh to grant us all success to establish the prayer and perform it as our Messenger (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) has explained it, in the

Masjid with the congregation; and that He guides those from the Muslims who are astray. [We ask Him] to make the prayer beloved to us, as well as the other acts of worship. Verily, He is the All-Hearing, the One Who answers the supplications.

Lesson 16
Ramaḍān Is the Month of Supplication

In the *Sunan* there is an authentic *ḥadīth* narrated by N'umān b. Bashīr (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

الدُّعَاءُ هُوَ الْعِبَادَةُ ثُمَّ قَرَأَ:

"Supplication is worship. Then he recited the verse:

﴿وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمُ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾﴾

'And your Lord said: 'Invoke Me, I will respond to your (invocation). Verily, those who scorn My worship, they will surely enter Hell in humiliation.' [Al-Ghāfir: 60]."[1]

Supplication is from the greatest and most sublime forms of worship. It is the sole right of Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى), and it is not permissible to direct it to other than Him, no matter who they may be.

It has an elevated station and lofty position in the religion. This is because it comprises of beseeching Allāh, a display of weakness and one's need of Him. The more submissive and present the heart, the greater and completer the act of worship is.

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[1] *Sunan Abū Dāwūd* (no. 1479) and *Sunan al-Tirmidhī* (no. 3247), al-Tirmidhī said it is *Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ*, and *Sunan Ibn* Mājah (no. 3828).

Supplication is the most effective form of worship to attain one's goal, and supplication involves observance of reliance [in Allāh] and seeking His Aid. *Tawakkul* [reliance in Allāh] is for the heart to depend upon Allāh and trust in Him to attain what is loved and to be repelled from what is detested.

The texts concerning the excellence of Tawakkul are abundant and cannot be enumerated.

The month of fasting, the month of Ramaḍān, has a distinct quality as it relates to supplication. For verily the fasting person is from those whose supplication is not rejected, if he is sincere in his fast, purifies his worship [from anything that will spoil it] and is truthful to Allāh. There comes in the *ḥadīth*:

ثَلَاثُ دَعَوَاتٍ مُسْتَجَابَاتٌ: دَعْوَةُ الصَّائِمِ، وَدَعْوَةُ الْمَظْلُومِ، وَدَعْوَةُ الْمُسَافِرِ

> "Three supplications are answered: The supplication of the fasting person, the supplication of the oppressed and the supplication of the traveler."[1]

He (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

ثَلَاثُ دَعَوَاتٍ لَا تُرَدُّ: دَعْوَةُ الْوَالِدِ لِوَلَدِهِ، وَدَعْوَةُ الصَّائِمِ، وَدَعْوَةُ الْمُسَافِرِ

[1] Collected by al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Duʿā* (no. 1215) and al-Bayhaqī (no. 7513).

> "Three supplications are not rejected: The supplication of the parent for their child, the supplication of the fasting person and the supplication of the traveler."[1]

That which highlights the excellence of supplication and its elevated station in the month of Ramaḍān is that His Saying:

﴿ وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِى عَنِّى فَإِنِّى قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ ٱلدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۖ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا۟ لِى وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِى لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ ﴿١٨٦﴾ ﴾

> "And when My slaves ask you (O Muhammad) concerning Me, then (answer them), I am indeed near (to them by My Knowledge). I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me (without any mediator or intercessor). So let them obey Me and believe in Me, so that they may be led aright," has come among the verses pertaining to fasting and in their midst. Before this verse is His Saying:

﴿ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أُنزِلَ فِيهِ ٱلْقُرْءَانُ ﴾

> "The month of Ramadan in which was revealed the Qur'ān." [Al-Baqarah: 185]

And after this verse is His Saying:

﴿ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ ٱلصِّيَامِ ٱلرَّفَثُ إِلَىٰ نِسَآئِكُمْ ۚ ﴾

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[1] Collected by al-Bayhaqī in *al-Sunan al-Kubra* (no. 6185: [3/345]).

> "It is made lawful for you to have sexual relations with your wives on the night of the fasts [*Ṣawm*]." [Al-Baqarah: 187]

This noble verse – which pertains to supplication – has come in the middle of the verses about fasting and it is surrounded by such verses. Perhaps this indicates the significance of supplication and its excellence in this month. This is because the servant in this blessed month is full of hope that Allāh will grant him success to properly fulfil the right of Allāh in this blessed month in the best and most perfect manner.

There is no path to this except through asking Allāh and supplicating to Him, being humble before Him and beseeching Him. Furthermore, the servant may have committed some sins prior to Ramaḍān or some deficiency emanated from him or he was heedless during Ramaḍān, and he desires to repent to Allāh and for his sins to be forgiven. There is no way to achieve this except with supplication.

It is as if Allāh is directing His servants to a thing where they can seek shelter and flee, with which their requests are answered, their needs are fulfilled, their slips are pardoned and with which their sins are forgiven.

Ibn al-Qayyim (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

> "The foundation of all good is to know that whatever Allāh wills, will happen, and whatever He does not will, will not happen. Consequently, you are certain that good deeds are from His blessings. Therefore, you thank Him for them and implore Him not to cut you

off from them. You also recognize that sins are from Him forsaking you and His punishment, so you beseech Him to shield you from this and to not leave you to your own self in doing good deeds and abandoning evil deeds.

The people of understanding unanimously agree that the origin of all good is from Allāh granting the servant success, and the origin of all evil is from Allāh forsaking the servant. They all agree that success is for Allāh to not leave you to your own self, and that desertion is when He abandons you and leaves you to your own self. Thus, if the origin of all good is Him granting [the servant] success, which is in the Hand of Allāh and not in the hand of the servant, then its key is supplication, displaying one's need of Allāh, sincerely turning to Him, placing one's hope in Him and fearing Him. When He gives the servant this key, He wants to open this for him, and whenever He diverts him from this key, the door to good is firmly bolted before him...

No one has been destroyed except due to their neglect of gratitude and their failure to display their need of Allāh and supplicate to Him. No one has ever been victorious – by the Will of Allāh and His aid – except by being grateful to Him, truly displaying their need of Him and supplicating to Him."[1]

Supplication (*Du'ā*) has a very important place in Islām, its station is elevated and its position is lofty, as it is the most significant act

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[1] *Al-Fawā'id*, p. 127-128.

of worship, the greatest act of obedience and the most beneficial pious deed. That is why there are many texts in the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh clarifying its excellence, stressing its station and importance, encouraging with it and inciting towards it.

These texts that clarify the excellence of supplication carry various meanings. Some of these texts command with supplication and encourage it. Some warn against abandoning and scorning it. Some mention its great reward and large recompense with Allāh. In some there is a praise of the believers due to them fulfilling this and a commendation for perfecting it, and there are other expressions in the noble Qur'ān clarifying the excellence of supplication.

Verily, Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) opened His noble Book with *Du'ā* and closed it with it. *Sūrah al-Ḥamd*, which is the *Fātiḥah* of the noble Qur'ān, comprises of supplicating to Allāh for the most important of goals and most complete of objectives, which is asking Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) for guidance to the straight path, aid to worship Him [correctly] and [success] to carry out His obedience (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى).

Similarly, *Sūrah al-Nās*, which is the closing of the noble Qur'ān, comprises of supplicating to Allāh. This is in the form of seeking Allāh's refuge from the evil of the whisperer who withdraws of Jinn and men, who whispers in the breast of mankind. There is absolutely no doubt that the Qur'ān opening with *Du'ā* and closing with it is a proof of its importance, and that it is the essence of all forms of worship and their core.

In fact, Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) called *Du'ā* worship in more than one verse, which shows its elevated station, like His Saying (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى):

﴿ وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمُ ٱدْعُونِىٓ أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِى سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾ ﴾

"And your Lord said, 'Invoke Me [*Du'ā*], I will respond to your (invocation). Verily! Those who scorn My worship they will surely enter Hell in humiliation!'" [Al-Ghāfir: 60]

And in His Saying in that which He mentioned about His Prophet Ibrāhīm:

﴿ وَأَعْتَزِلُكُمْ وَمَا تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَأَدْعُوا۟ رَبِّى عَسَىٰٓ أَلَّآ أَكُونَ بِدُعَآءِ رَبِّى شَقِيًّا ﴿٤٨﴾ فَلَمَّا ٱعْتَزَلَهُمْ وَمَا يَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَهَبْنَا لَهُۥٓ إِسْحَٰقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ ۖ وَكُلًّا جَعَلْنَا نَبِيًّا ﴿٤٩﴾ ﴾

"[Ibrāhīm said], 'And I shall turn away from you and from those whom you invoke besides Allāh. And I shall call [*Du'ā*] on my Lord; and I hope that I shall not be unblessed in my invocation to my Lord.' So when he had turned away from them and from those whom they worshipped besides Allāh, We gave him Ishaq (Isaac) and Ya'qūb (Jacob), and each one of them We made a Prophet." [Maryam: 48-49]

There are also other similar verses.

He (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ) referred to *Du'ā* as the religion, as in His Saying:

﴿ فَٱدْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ ٱلدِّينَ ۗ ﴾

> "So call upon Him, [being] sincere to Him in religion." [Al-Ghāfir: 65] There are also other similar verses.

All of this establishes the great importance of *Du'ā* (supplication to Allāh), and that it is the foundation of servitude and its essence. It is a sign of humility, obedience and submission before the Lord and a display of the servant's need of Him. Hence, Allāh encouraged His servants with *Du'ā* and incited them towards it in many verses of the noble Qur'ān.

He, the Most High, said:

﴿ ادْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً ۚ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾ وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا وَادْعُوهُ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا ۚ إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾ ﴾

> "Invoke your Lord with humility and in secret. He likes not the aggressors. And do not do mischief on the earth, after it has been set in order, and invoke Him with fear and hope; Surely, Allāh 's Mercy is (ever) near unto the good-doers." Al-A'rāf: 55-56]

He, the Most High, said:

﴿ هُوَ الْحَيُّ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَادْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ ۗ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٦٥﴾ ﴾

> "He is the Ever Living; none has the right to be worshipped but He, so invoke Him making your

> worship pure for Him Alone. All the praises and thanks be to Allāh , the Lord of the whole of the creation." [Al-Ghāfir: 65]

He (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ) informed, encouraging His servants to make *Du'ā*, that He is near to them [through His knowledge] and He answers their supplications, He fulfils their hopes and gives them their wishes. He, the Most High, said:

﴿ وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِى عَنِّى فَإِنِّى قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ ٱلدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۖ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا۟ لِى وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِى لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ ﴿١٨٦﴾ ﴾

> "And when My slaves ask you (O Muhammad) concerning Me, then (answer them), I am indeed near (to them by My Knowledge). I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me (without any mediator or intercessor). So let them obey Me and believe in Me, so that they may be led aright." [Al-Baqarah: 186]

He, the Most High, said:

﴿ أَمَّن يُجِيبُ ٱلْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ ٱلسُّوٓءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَآءَ ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ أَءِلَٰهٌ مَّعَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾ ﴾

> "Is not He (better than your gods) Who responds to the distressed one, when he calls Him, and Who removes the evil, and makes you inheritors of the earth,

> generations after generations. Is there any *ilāh* (god) with Allāh? Little is that you remember!" [Al-Naml: 62]

The greater the servant's knowledge of Allāh and the stronger his relationship with Him, the greater his supplication and the stronger his submission to Him will be. That is why, the Prophets of Allāh and His Messengers were the greatest of the people in actualization of *Du'ā* and practicing it in all their situations and circumstances. Allāh praised them in the noble Qur'ān and mentioned a number of their supplications that they made at different situations and various events. Allāh said, describing them:

﴿إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ يُسَٰرِعُونَ فِى ٱلْخَيْرَٰتِ وَيَدْعُونَنَا رَغَبًا وَرَهَبًا ۖ وَكَانُوا۟ لَنَا خَٰشِعِينَ﴾

> "Verily, they used to hasten to do good deeds, and they used to call on Us with hope and fear, and used to humble themselves before Us." [Al-Anbiyā: 90]

Therefore, it is upon the believer to show great concern for this form of worship and to seize the times of this distinguished month to turn to Allāh with supplication, invocations and earnest requests, with hope and fear, observing the conditions of *Du'ā* and its etiquettes. Hoping to be from those who successfully earn Allāh's reward and are safe from the Fire. For verily Allāh liberates servants from the Fire, and this occurs every night from the nights of Ramaḍān.

O Allāh, accept from us our fast, standing in prayer and supplications, and bless us with liberation from the Fire, O Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists.

Lesson 17
O Seeker of Good, Come Forth

Al-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah related a *ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said that the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

إِذَا كَانَ أَوَّلُ لَيْلَةٍ مِنْ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ صُفِّدَتْ الشَّيَاطِينُ وَمَرَدَةُ الْجِنِّ، وَغُلِّقَتْ أَبْوَابُ النَّارِ فَلَمْ يُفْتَحْ مِنْهَا بَابٌ، وَفُتِّحَتْ أَبْوَابُ الْجَنَّةِ فَلَمْ يُغْلَقْ مِنْهَا بَابٌ، وَيُنَادِي مُنَادٍ يَا بَاغِيَ الْخَيْرِ أَقْبِلْ وَيَا بَاغِيَ الشَّرِّ أَقْصِرْ، وَلِلَّهِ عُتَقَاءُ مِنْ النَّارِ وَذَلِكَ كُلُّ لَيْلَةٍ

> "On the first night of the month of Ramaḍān, the devils and the rebellious Jinn are shackled, the gates of the Fire are closed and not a gate remains open, the gates of Paradise are opened and not a gate remains closed. A caller calls out, 'O seeker of good, come forth. O seeker of evil, halt.' Allāh emancipates a people from the Fire; and this is every night."[1]

It is clearly stated in the *ḥadīth* related by Imām Aḥmad in his *Musnad* that the caller who calls out is one of the angels of Allāh and that this is repeated each night until the month comes to an end. He (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

وَيُنَادِي فِيهِ مَلَكٌ يَا بَاغِيَ الْخَيْرِ أَبْشِرْ يَا بَاغِيَ الشَّرِّ أَقْصِرْ حَتَّى يَنْقَضِيَ رَمَضَانُ

[1] Collected by al-Tirmidhī (no. 682) and Ibn Mājah (no. 1642). The wording here is that related by al-Tirmidhī.

> "An angel will call out, 'O seeker of good, glad tidings; O seeker of evil, halt,' until Ramaḍān is over.'"[1]

The people of faith do not hear the voice of the one who calls out except that they are certain about this address, because the one who informed us of this is the truthful one and the one who is absolutely believed, who does not speak of his own desires; it is revelation that is revealed to him.

Let us be aware of this address in the blessed nights of Ramaḍān; this great address. Let us acknowledge this address in our lives. Let us reflect over our states and our path, and let us analyze our condition to determine what address is applicable to us. There are two addresses, and each one refers to a certain group of people: "O seeker of good, come forth," and "O seeker of evil, halt."

In this is an indication that the people's hearts are of two types:

A heart that desires good, searches for it, seeks after it and pursues its.

The other heart – and refuge is sought with Allāh – searches for evil, proceeds in its pursuit and goes in search of it. They are not the same. The person whose heart is righteous and upright, seeking good and pursuing it, is not like the one – and refuge is sought with Allāh – whose heart is very wicked and depraved, and searches for evil and pursues it.

Whoever possesses this honorable heart, which searches for good and pursues it, then let him capitalize from the month of goodness

[1] *Musnad* of al-Imām Aḥmad (no. 18042).

by turning to Allāh, increasing in acts of obedience and performing much worship; and by capitalizing from the month of goodness by performing many desirable actions and supererogatory acts.

There comes in the *hadīth Qudsī* that Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) said:

وَمَا تَقَرَّبَ إِلَيَّ عَبْدِي بِشَيْءٍ أَحَبَّ إِلَيَّ مِمَّا افْتَرَضْتُ عَلَيْهِ وَمَا يَزَالُ عَبْدِي يَتَقَرَّبُ إِلَيَّ بِالنَّوَافِلِ حَتَّى أُحِبَّهُ فَإِذَا أَحْبَبْتُهُ كُنْتُ سَمْعَهُ الَّذِي يَسْمَعُ بِهِ وَبَصَرَهُ الَّذِي يُبْصِرُ بِهِ وَيَدَهُ الَّتِي يَبْطِشُ بِهَا وَرِجْلَهُ الَّتِي يَمْشِي بِهَا وَإِنْ سَأَلَنِي لَأُعْطِيَنَّهُ وَلَئِنْ اسْتَعَاذَنِي لَأُعِيذَنَّهُ

> "My slave draws near to Me with nothing more beloved to Me than what I have made obligatory upon him, and My slave keeps drawing nearer to Me with voluntary deeds until I love him. And when I love him, I am his hearing with which he hears, his sight with which he sees, his hand with which he seizes, and his foot with which he walks. If he asks me, I will surely give to him, and if he seeks refuge in Me, I will surely protect him."[1]

The one who focuses on these good deeds strives to perform the obligations firstly, hastening to them, giving them great importance and endeavoring to complete and perfect them. Then after that he increases [in good deeds], performing the desirable acts and recommended deeds, seizing the opportunity and carrying out many of these actions.

[1] Bukhārī (no. 6502).

Without doubt, this address that is repeated every night from the nights of Ramaḍān is considered a great stimulus for the resolutions and aspirations in the month of good deeds. He calls out to those engaging in good deeds, inspiring them and strengthening their resolve to race to do good. Whether it pertains to their own selves such as preservation of the obligations and establishment of the prayer, fast and other than this from the obligations, in the best and most complete fashion, them racing to perform the recommended acts and *Sunan*, and them staying away from the prohibitions and that which is detested; or whether it pertains to doing good to others like giving advice, honoring of the parents, maintaining family ties, benevolence to the neighbors and rest of the people, spending in the path of Allāh, aiding the poor and needy, repelling harm from the people and assisting them through wealth, position and body.

The guidance of the Prophet (ﷺ) was the best and most complete guidance. Ibn al-Qayyim (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

> "The Prophet (ﷺ) was the most generous of the people in giving what he possessed as charity, and he would never deem anything that he gave for Allāh too great or too insignificant.
>
> No one ever asked him for anything he possessed except that he gave it to them, whether it was great or small. He gave things away like a person who did not fear poverty. Open-handedness and charity were the most beloved things to him. His delight and happiness to give something was greater than the joy of the receiver, when he receives [a gift]. He was the most generous of people with good, and [the generosity of] his right hand was like a blowing wind.

If he came across someone needy, he would give them preference over his own self, sometimes with his food and other times with his clothing.

He would diversify the way he gave his charity and his gifts. Sometimes he would give gifts. Sometimes through charity. Sometimes through presents. Sometimes he would buy something and give the seller both the goods and payment, as he did with the camel he purchased from Jābir.

Sometimes he would borrow something as a loan and then return more [than he borrowed], something superior and something greater. Sometimes he would buy something and give more than its real value. Sometimes he would accept a present and repay it with something more valuable or something many times superior.

All the above was done out of his kindness, and to diversify the forms of charity and benevolence in every way possible.

His charity and benevolence was displayed in what he possessed, his disposition and words. He would give whatever he possessed. He would command others with charity, encourage them to do this and call to this through his disposition and words.

If a miserly individual saw him, his (ﷺ) state would call that person to be generous and charitable. Whoever mingled with him, accompanied him and witnessed his guidance would not be able to stop himself from kindness and generosity.

> His guidance (ﷺ) called to benevolence, charity and good. Due to this, he was the happiest of people, and the purest and softest of them in heart. Verily, charity and doing good have an amazing effect in the attainment of happiness."[1]

Kindness to people and helping them with your money, influence, physical help, and other types of kindness is a means of relaxation. The generous and kind person is much more relaxed and purer and softer in heart, while the stingy person, who displays no kindness, has the tightest chest, the most depressed life, and the most worries and stress.

One of the proofs for this is the *ḥadīth* related by Bukhārī and Muslim narrated by Ibn Abbas (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said:

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَجْوَدَ النَّاسِ، وَكَانَ أَجْوَدُ مَا يَكُونُ فِي رَمَضَانَ حِينَ يَلْقَاهُ جِبْرِيلُ، وَكَانَ يَلْقَاهُ فِي كُلِّ لَيْلَةٍ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ فَيُدَارِسُهُ الْقُرْآنَ، فَلَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَجْوَدُ بِالْخَيْرِ مِنَ الرِّيحِ الْمُرْسَلَةِ

> "The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) was the most generous of people. He was most generous in Ramaḍān when Jibrīl would come to him. Jibrīl would meet him every night and review the Qur'ān with him during the month of Ramaḍān. The Messenger of Allāh was more generous than the blowing wind."[2]

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[1] *Zād al-Maʿād* of Ibn al-Qayyim (2/21-22).

[2] Bukhārī (no. 6) and Muslim (no. 2308).

From the good deeds that the Prophet (ﷺ) encouraged with was providing food for the fasting person to break his fast and equipping an army in the path of Allāh:

مَنْ فَطَّرَ صَائِمًا أَوْ جَهَّزَ غَازِيًا فَلَهُ مِثْلُ أَجْرِهِ

> "Whoever gives food to a fasting person with which to break his fast or equips a combatant, will receive a similar reward."[1]

He (ﷺ) also encouraged with *'Umrah* in Ramaḍān. Al-Bukhārī related a *ḥadīth* narrated by Jābir who said that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

عُمْرَةً فِي رَمَضَانَ تَقْضِي حَجَّةً معي

> "*'Umrah* in Ramaḍān is equivalent to Hajj with me."[2]

Ibn Mājah related from Jābir that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

عُمْرَةٌ فِي رَمَضَانَ تَعْدِلُ حَجَّةً

> "*'Umrah* in Ramaḍān is equivalent to Hajj."[3]

The reward in this month is great, the recompense is huge and the doors of good are vast, so let everyone take a share of this.

[1] *Sunan al-Bayhaqī* (no. 7927).

[2] Bukhārī (no. 1863).

[3] *Sunan Ibn Mājah* (no. 2995).

And Allāh said:

﴿فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ﴾

"So hasten towards all that is good." [Al-Baqarah: 148]

If the individual does this, then let him make his intention purely for Allāh, anticipate the reward from Him, persist upon this, endeavor to follow the Prophet (ﷺ) and conform to his guidance in everything, and seek aid solely from Allāh to perform acts of piety, compete in the performance of acts of obedience and perform many good deeds.

From the amazing supplications that the Prophet (ﷺ) taught his companions – which is extremely beneficial in this area – is that which was related by Ibn Mājah from 'Ā'ishah (رضي الله عنها) who said:

أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَلَّمَهَا هَذَا الدُّعَاءَ : اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ الْخَيْرِ كُلِّهِ ؛ عَاجِلِهِ وَآجِلِهِ ، مَا عَلِمْتُ مِنْهُ وَمَا لَمْ أَعْلَمْ ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ الشَّرِّ كُلِّهِ ؛ عَاجِلِهِ وَآجِلِهِ مَا عَلِمْتُ مِنْهُ وَمَا لَمْ أَعْلَمْ ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ خَيْرِ مَا سَأَلَكَ عَبْدُكَ وَنَبِيُّكَ ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا عَاذَ بِهِ عَبْدُكَ وَنَبِيُّكَ ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَا قَرَّبَ إِلَيْهَا مِنْ قَوْلٍ أَوْ عَمَلٍ ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ النَّارِ وَمَا قَرَّبَ إِلَيْهَا مِنْ قَوْلٍ أَوْ عَمَلٍ ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ أَنْ تَجْعَلَ كُلَّ قَضَاءٍ قَضَيْتَهُ لِي خَيْرًا

"That the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) taught her this supplication, 'O Allāh, I ask You for all that is good, in this world and in the Hereafter, what I know and what I do not know. O Allāh, I seek refuge with You from

> all evil, in this world and in the Hereafter, what I know and what I do not know. O Allāh, I ask You for the best of that which Your slave and Prophet has asked You for, and I seek refuge with You from the evil from which Your slave and Prophet sought refuge. O Allāh, I ask You for Paradise and for that which brings one closer to it, in word and action. I seek refuge in You from the Fire and from that which brings one closer to it, in word and action. And I ask You to make every decree that You decree concerning me good."[1]

May Allāh grant us all success to perform good deeds and to seize these rewards and lofty ranks.

[1] *Sunan Ibn Mājah* (no. 3846).

Lesson 18
O Seeker of Evil, Halt

The caller of Allāh calls out to the fasting servants each night from the nights of Ramaḍān:

يَا بَاغِيَ الْخَيْرِ أَقْبِلْ وَيَا بَاغِيَ الشَّرِّ أَقْصِرْ

"O seeker of good, come forth; O seeker of evil, halt." This is considered to be a great incentive and strong stimulus for the people of faith to compete in doing righteous deeds and desist from evil and forbidden acts.

Even though the people of faith do not hear this call with their own ears in the blessed nights of Ramaḍān they are certain of its occurrence, because the one who informed of this is the truthful one and the one who is absolutely believed, who does not speak of his own desires; it is revelation that is revealed to him.

The discussion concerning the importance of racing to perform good deeds and hastening to carry out acts of obedience in this blessed month and season has already preceded, as in this month there are many doors and paths to good.

Furthermore, it is also a great season to desist from acts of disobedience and distance oneself from sins. This is due to the destruction that arises from committing them and the sins and wrongdoings that the perpetrator reaps, as a result of which they are deserving of hate and punishment from the All-Mighty, the Compeller, especially in this noble month and magnificent season, the month of obedience.

Verily, it is a month for the individual to correct the path and course that they traverse upon. It is the month for repentance and turning to Allāh with penitence. It is the month to increase in the performance of righteous deeds and continue upon them, for the one who was upright prior to the arrival of the Ramaḍān.

So how can some people continue to persist in disobedience and be engrossed in transgression, even in this great month, the month of obedience and forgiveness. These individuals, and the likes of them, are being addressed with the call:

"O seeker of evil, halt."

This means: Repent to Allāh, leave the evil and transgression you are involved in, so that you do not regret your evildoing in this month, and rectify this affair before it is too late.

You may find yourself dying in your present state or you may be afflicted by the supplication of a believer who has been affected by your evil and injured by your harm, so this is a reason for your destruction and misery in this life and the Hereafter; or the month departs and you have only increased your remoteness from Allāh. What a catastrophe for the one who ends up like this and leaves the blessed month in this fashion.

All evil is forbidden at all times and periods, whether the harm is restricted to the individual or affects others from the creation of Allāh, whether it is a statement of the tongue, action of the limb or something evil concealed within the heart, and whether this evil is something read, heard or seen.

Allāh, the Most High, said:

﴿ قُلْ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّيَ ٱلْفَوَٰحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ وَٱلْإِثْمَ وَٱلْبَغْيَ بِغَيْرِ ٱلْحَقِّ وَأَن تُشْرِكُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزِّلْ بِهِۦ سُلْطَٰنًا وَأَن تَقُولُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ ﴾

"Say (O Muhammad), '(But) the things that my Lord has indeed forbidden are immoralities, whether committed openly or secretly, sins (of all kinds), unrighteous oppression, joining partners (in worship) with Allāh for which He has given no authority, and saying things about Allāh of which you have no knowledge.'" [Al-A'rāf: 33]

Ibn al-Qayyim (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

"The foundations of all acts of disobedience, the major and the minor, are three:

The heart's attachment to other than Allāh, succumbing to the force of anger and [succumbing] to the force of lusts. This is *Shirk* [associating partners with Allāh], oppression and immoralities.

The conclusion of attachment to other than Allāh is *Shirk* [to associate partners with Allāh] and to supplicate to a deity besides Him. The conclusion of succumbing to the force of anger is murder. The conclusion of succumbing to the force of lusts is fornication.

This is why Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ) mentioned all of these in His Saying:

﴿وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَدۡعُونَ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ وَلَا يَقۡتُلُونَ ٱلنَّفۡسَ ٱلَّتِي حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا بِٱلۡحَقِّ وَلَا يَزۡنُونَۚ وَمَن يَفۡعَلۡ ذَٰلِكَ يَلۡقَ أَثَامًا ۝٦٨﴾

> "And those who invoke not any other *ilāh* (god) along with Allāh, nor kill such life as Allāh has forbidden, except for just cause, nor commit illegal sexual intercourse and whoever does this shall receive the punishment." (Al-Furqān: 68)

These sins call to one another. *Shirk* leads to oppression and immorality, as *Ikhlās* (sincerity) and *Tawḥīd* turn them away from the individual. Allāh (سُبۡحَانَهُۥ وَتَعَالَىٰ) said,

﴿كَذَٰلِكَ لِنَصۡرِفَ عَنۡهُ ٱلسُّوٓءَ وَٱلۡفَحۡشَآءَۚ إِنَّهُۥ مِنۡ عِبَادِنَا ٱلۡمُخۡلَصِينَ ۝٢٤﴾

> "Thus it was, that We might turn away from him evil and illegal sexual intercourse. Surely, he was one of Our chosen, guided slaves." (Yusuf: 24)

Evil, here, is referring to excessive love and *Faḥshā* is referring to fornication.

Similarly, oppression leads to *Shirk* and immorality. *Shirk* is the greatest form of oppression, just as *Tawḥīd* is the greatest form of justice. Justice is connected to *Tawḥīd* and oppression is connected to *Shirk*. This is why Allāh mentioned them together.

An example of the first, then this is found in His Saying:

﴿ شَهِدَ ٱللَّهُ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ وَأُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمِ قَآئِمًۢا بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۚ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿١٨﴾ ﴾

"Allāh bears witness that none has the right to be worshipped but He, and the angels, and those having knowledge (also give this witness); (He is always) maintaining His creation in Justice. None has the right to be worshipped but He), the All-Mighty, the All-Wise." (Āl ʿImrān: 18)

As for the second, then this is found in His Saying:

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٣﴾ ﴾

"Verily! Joining others in worship with Allāh is a great oppression indeed." (Luqmān: 13)

Immorality leads to *Shirk* and oppression, especially when the desire is intense and cannot be fulfilled except with a type of oppression and seeking aid through magic and the devil.

Allāh mentioned fornication along with *Shirk* in His Saying:

﴿ ٱلزَّانِى لَا يَنكِحُ إِلَّا زَانِيَةً أَوْ مُشْرِكَةً وَٱلزَّانِيَةُ لَا يَنكِحُهَآ إِلَّا زَانٍ أَوْ مُشْرِكٌ ۚ وَحُرِّمَ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٣﴾ ﴾

"The adulterer marries not but an adulteress or a female polytheist and the adulteress none marries her except an

adulterer or a male polytheist. Such a thing is forbidden to the believers (of Islamic Monotheism)." (Al-Nūr: 3)

These three things lead to one another, and they command with one another. Therefore, the weaker the *Tawḥīd* in the heart the stronger the *Shirk*, the greater the immorality and the more it is attached to these images and excessively in love with them.

Similar to this is His Saying:

﴿ فَمَآ أُوتِيتُم مِّن شَىْءٍ فَمَتَٰعُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَمَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبَٰٓئِرَ ٱلْإِثْمِ وَٱلْفَوَٰحِشَ وَإِذَا مَا غَضِبُوا۟ هُمْ يَغْفِرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ ﴾

"So whatever you have been given is but a passing enjoyment for this worldly life, but that which is with Allāh is better and more lasting for those who believe and put their trust in their Lord. And those who avoid the greater sins, and immorality, and when they are angry, they forgive." (Shūra: 36-37)

Allāh informs us that what is with Him is better for those who believe and rely upon Him, and this is *Tawḥīd*.

Then He said:

﴿ وَٱلَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبَٰٓئِرَ ٱلْإِثْمِ وَٱلْفَوَٰحِشَ ﴾

"And those who avoid the greater sins, and immorality."

This is to desist from the urge of the force of lusts.

Then He said:

﴿وَإِذَا مَا غَضِبُوا هُمْ يَغْفِرُونَ﴾

"And when they are angry, they forgive."

This is to oppose the force of anger. Thus, it gathers *Tawḥīd*, justice and chastity, which are the constituents of all good."[1]

The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) would seek refuge with Allāh from evil and sins, and he would guide to this, like his saying (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) in the sermon of need:

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ نَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا
وَسَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا

> "Indeed, all praise belongs to Allāh. We praise Him, seek His aid and His assistance. We seek refuge with Allāh from the evil of our own souls and the evil of our wicked actions."

Similarly, what has previously been mentioned about the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) teaching Abū Bakr to say in the morning and evening:

أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ نَفْسِي وَمِنْ شَرِّ الشَّيْطَانِ وَشِرْكِهِ

[1] *Al-Fawā'id* of Ibn al-Qayyim, p. 116-118.

> "I seek refuge in You from the evil within myself, and from the evil of the devil and his (incitement to) attribute partners (with Allāh)."[1]

The Muslim should know that abandoning evil, sins and disobedience comprises of benefits and fruits that the individual cannot calculate nor can the tongue fully express.

Ibn al-Qayyim (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

> "Glorified be Allāh, Lord of the whole of the creation. If the following were the only benefits from abandoning sins and disobedience [they would suffice]:
>
> The maintenance of decency, the protection of honor and the preservation of dignity. The safeguarding of wealth, which Allāh has made a provision for the benefits of this world and the Hereafter. The creation's love for such a person and their acceptance of him. A good life, relaxation of the body, strength of the heart, serenity of the soul, softness of the heart and happiness.
>
> Safety from the terrorization of the wicked and the sinners. Lack of depression, anxiety and sorrow. Self-respect which prevents tolerance of humiliation. It protects the light of the heart from being extinguished by the darkness of disobedience. An escape from that which brings anguish to the wicked and the sinners. Sustenance is made easy for him from avenues that he would never imagine.

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[1] The reference for this *ḥadīth* has already been mentioned.

Things that are difficult for the people of disobedience and sin are made easy. Righteous deeds are made easy for him. Knowledge is simplified for the individual. Praise among the people. A lot of supplication is made for him. The beauty acquired by his face. The respect for him placed in the hearts of the people. Them supporting and helping him if he is wronged and harmed.

[The fact that] they defend his honor when the backbiter backbites him. The speed with which his supplication is answered. The disappearance of alienization between him and Allāh. The closeness of the angels. The distance of the devils of mankind and the Jinn from him. The people competing to assist him and fulfil his needs. Their request for his affection and companionship.

Him not fearing death; rather, he is delighted with it because he is going to His Lord, to meet Him and to his destination, which will be with Him. The insignificance of the world in his heart and importance of the Hereafter to him. His coveting the prized dominion [i.e. Paradise] and ultimate success there.

Tasting the sweetness of obedience and the sweetness of faith. The bearers of the Throne and the angels around it supplicating for him. The [fact that the] scribes are delighted with him and supplicate for him at all times. The growth of his intellect, understanding, faith and knowledge.

His attainment of Allāh 's love. Allāh nurturing him, and Him being delighted with his repentance. This is how Allāh recompenses the servant with delight and pleasure, and there

is no share of His delight nor pleasure for disobedience, in any way whatsoever.

These are some of the effects, in this world, for abandoning disobedience.

When the servant dies, the angels meet him with glad tidings of Paradise from his Lord and that there is no fear nor sadness upon him. He travels from the prison of this world and its confinement to a garden from the gardens of Paradise, where he will experience bliss until the Day of Resurrection.

On the Day of Resurrection, the people will be in heat and sweat, and he will be under the shade of the Throne. When they depart from before Allāh, he will be taken on the Right along with the pious *Awliyā* of Allāh and His successful party.

﴿ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ ذُو ٱلْفَضْلِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ﴾

> "That is the bounty of Allāh which He gives to whom He wills, and Allāh is the possessor of great bounty." [Al-Hadid: 21]"[1]

O Allāh, preserve us with Islām, sitting, standing and lying. Do not allow the jealous hearted nor our enemies to gloat over our misfortunes. O Allāh, we ask Your for all good, the treasures of which are in Your hand, and we seek refuge with You from all evil.

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[1] *Al-Fawā'id*, p. 224-225.

Lesson 19
Hastening to Break the Fast and Delaying the Predawn Meal

There are many texts conveyed from the Prophet (ﷺ) commanding with hastening to break the fast and delaying the predawn meal. These texts indicate the importance of this through a number of different meanings: sometimes by commanding with this, sometimes by clarifying its virtue and great reward, sometimes by highlighting some of the amazing wisdoms that result from this, sometimes prohibiting its abandonment and through other meanings.

From these texts is the *ḥadīth* in the two authentic collections [Bukharī and Muslim] where the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

إِذَا أَقْبَلَ اللَّيْلُ مِنْ هَا هُنَا، وَأَدْبَرَ النَّهَارُ مِنْ هَا هُنَا، وَغَرَبَتْ الشَّمْسُ فَقَدْ أَفْطَرَ الصَّائِمُ

"When the night arrives from over here, the day ends from over there, and the Sun has set, the fasting person breaks his fast."[1]

There comes in Sunan Abū Dāwūd and al-Tirmidhī a *ḥadīth* narrated by Anas (رضي الله عنه) who said:

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُفْطِرُ عَلَى رُطَبَاتٍ قَبْلَ أَنْ يُصَلِّيَ، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ رُطَبَاتٌ فَعَلَى تَمَرَاتٍ، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ حَسَا حَسَوَاتٍ مِنْ مَاءٍ

[1] Bukharī (no. 1954) and Muslim (no. 1100). The wording is that related by Bukharī.

> "The Prophet (ﷺ) would break his fast with fresh dates prior to praying. If he could not find any, then with drier dates, and if he could not find any, he would take some mouthfuls of water."[1]

It is authentically established that the Prophet (ﷺ):

كَانَ لَا يُصَلِّي الْمَغْرِبَ حَتَّى يُفْطِرَ، وَلَوْ عَلَى شَرْبَةٍ مِنْ مَاءٍ

> "Would not pray Maghrib until he had broken his fast, even if it was with a mouthful of water."[2]

He (ﷺ) said:

لَا تَزَالُ أُمَّتِي بِخَيْرٍ مَا عَجَّلُوا الْإِفْطَارَ

> "My nation will not cease to remain upon goodness so long as they hasten with the breaking of the fast."[3]

He (ﷺ) said:

لَا يَزَالُ النَّاسُ بِخَيْرٍ مَا عَجَّلُوا الْفِطْرَ

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[1] Collected by Abū Dāwūd (no. 2356) and al-Tirmidhī (no. 696). The wording is that related by Abū Dāwūd.

[2] Collected by al-Ḥākim in *al-Mustadrak* (no. 1577).

[3] Bukharī (no. 1957) and Muslim (no. 1098).

"The people will not cease to remain upon goodness so long as they hasten with the breaking of the fast."[1]

إِذَا أَفْطَرَ قَالَ ذَهَبَ الظَّمَأُ، وَابْتَلَّتْ الْعُرُوقُ، وَثَبَتَ الْأَجْرُ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ

"When he (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) broke his fast he said: Thirst has gone, the arteries are moist, and the reward is sure, if Allāh wills."[2]

He (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

هَلُمَّ إِلَى الْغَدَاءِ الْمُبَارَكِ

"Come to a blessed morning meal,"[3] referring to *Saḥūr*.

He (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

عَلَيْكُمْ بِغَدَاءِ السَّحُورِ فَإِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَدَاءُ الْمُبَارَكُ

"Take the *Saḥūr* meal, for verily it is a blessed meal."[4]

He (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

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[1] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad (no. 21209).

[2] Collected by Abū Dāwūd (no. 2357) and al-Ḥākim (no. 1536).

[3] Collected by al-Nasā'ī (no. 2167).

[4] Collected by al-Nasā'ī (no. 2166) and al-Imām Aḥmad (no. 17126).

السَّحُورُ أَكْلُهُ بَرَكَةٌ فَلَا تَدَعُوهُ وَلَوْ أَنْ يَجْرَعَ أَحَدُكُمْ جُرْعَةً مِنْ مَاءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى الْمُتَسَحِّرِينَ

"*Saḥūr* is a blessed meal, so do not leave it, even if one of you only takes a sip of water, for Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَىٰ) sends blessings on those who eat *Saḥūr*, and His angels supplicate for them."[1]

He (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

إِنَّ السَّحُورَ بَرَكَةٌ أَعْطَاكُمُوهَا اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ فَلَا تَدَعُوهَا

"Verily, *Saḥūr* is a blessing which Allāh has given to you, so do not leave it."[2]

He (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

تَسَحَّرُوا وَلَوْ بِجَرْعَةٍ مِنْ مَاءٍ

"Take *Saḥūr* even just by drinking a sip of water."[3]

He (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

مَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يَصُومَ فَلْيَتَسَحَّرْ بِشَيْءٍ

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[1] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad (no. 11334).

[2] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 23036).

[3] Collected by Ibn al-Ḥibbān (no. 3476).

"Whoever wants to fast, then let them eat something as *Saḥūr*."[1]

He (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

عَجِّلُوا الإِفْطَارَ، وَأَخِّرُوا السُّحُورَ

"Hasten to break the fast and delay the Suḥūr."[2]

He (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

بكّروا بالإفطار، وأخّروا السُّحور

"Break the fast as early as possible and delay the *Suḥūr*."[3]

He (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

> "Three things are from the manners of the Prophets: Hastening to break the fast, delaying the *Saḥūr*, and placing the right hand upon the left in prayer."[4]

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[1] Collected by al-Imām Aḥmad in *al-Musnad* (no. 14991).

[2] Collected by al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Mu'jam-Kabīr* (no. 21513).

[3] *Al-Kāmil* of Ibn 'Adī (6/323). *Al-Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥah* (no. 1773) and *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi'*.

[4] Mentioned by al-Haythamī in *Majma' al-Zawā'id* (2/105), and he referenced it to al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr*.

He (ﷺ) said:

> "Verily, us Prophets were commanded to hasten to break the fast, delay our *Saḥūr* and place our right hands upon our left hands in the prayer."[1]

These numerous *aḥādīth* – which carry various meanings – concerning the command to hasten to break the fast and delay the *Saḥūr* clearly indicate the importance of this great matter, which many of the people are heedless of due to ignorance of its importance, the amazing wisdoms it comprises of and the praiseworthy outcomes that results from it.

If the only thing [to be said] about hastening to break the fast and delaying the *Saḥūr* was that it is purely a display of following the Messenger (ﷺ) and responding to his command, and that it is a great act of worship through which to draw near to Allāh, then this would be sufficient as a reason to preserve this and not neglect it. Verily, this is the only way to attain the love of Allāh, as He, the Most High, said:

﴿ قُلْ إِن كُنتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ ٱللَّهَ فَٱتَّبِعُونِى يُحْبِبْكُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٣١﴾ ﴾

> "Say, 'If you (really) love Allāh then follow me, Allāh will love you and forgive you of your sins. And Allāh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.'" [Āl 'Imrān: 31]

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[1] Collected by al-Ṭayālisī (no. 2654), al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr* (no. 11323) and Ibn Ḥibbān (no. 1770). The wording is that related by al-Ṭabarānī.

It is authentically related in *Sunan al-Tirmidhī* that Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) said that the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

> "Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) said, 'The most beloved of My servants to Me are those who are quickest to break their fast.'"[1]

This is because of them aptly following the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and the swiftness of their response.

Furthermore, the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) has informed us that *Saḥūr* is a blessed [portion of] food, that it is a blessed meal and in it is blessings. In this is a clear proof of the excellence of this pious act. It is surrounded by blessings from all angles: blessing in the food, blessing in the action itself and blessing in the time.

Thus, the fasting person must strongly pursue this blessing by eating the predawn meal and delaying it, even if it is a sip of water, if he cannot find anything to eat besides it.

The word *Barakah* [blessing] refers to the descent of divine good upon something, its increase, general benefit and an increase in the reward for something. So how important and excellent is *Saḥūr*!

However, many people are still heedless of it, either due to ignorance of its virtue and elevated place or due to their preference of this life over the Hereafter, so they prefer sleep instead. Normally the reason for this is that they stay awake at night, and it is worse if they are engaged in something forbidden – we ask Allāh for wellbeing and safety.

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[1] Al-Tirmidhī (no. 700).

Additionally, the time before dawn [which is the time for *Saḥūr*] is one of the best times and most abundant in blessings. Allāh praises those who seek forgiveness during this time, and it is the time when the Lord descends to the lowest heaven to forgive those who seek His forgiveness, to answer those who call upon Him, grant the requests of those who ask of Him and reward His servants with the best reward in this life and on the Day of Judgment.

So how can a person deprive himself of this good in this magnificent month, the month of obedience, seeking forgiveness and liberation from the Fire? Allāh sends *Ṣalāh* upon those who eat *Saḥūr* and so do the angels. The *Ṣalāh* of Allāh refers to Him praising His servant in the highest gathering [of angels], and the *Ṣalāh* of the angels is the angels supplicating for the servant. How prestigious an honor and virtue do those who eat *Saḥūr* receive.

Preserving [the *Sunnah*] of hastening to break the fast and delaying the predawn meal is a means to preserve the good present in the people, for surely it is a reason for this. That is in addition to its effect in strengthening the body, energizing it, and banishing weakness and laziness, during the fast.

There comes in some texts a clear mention of one of the great wisdoms of hastening to break the fast and delaying the *Saḥūr*, and a notification of an affair that must be guarded, always, so that this religion can be manifest and so that this nation maintains its good. This is to oppose the People of the Book from the Jews and the Christians.

The Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

> "The difference between our fast and the fast of the People of the Book is eating *Saḥūr*."[1]

He (ﷺ) said:

> "The people will not cease to be in a state of good as long as they hasten to break the fast. For verily the Jews delay it."[2]

He (ﷺ) said:

> "The religion will continue to be manifest as long as the people hasten to break their fast, because the Jews and Christians delay it."[3]

The legislator instructed us to oppose the Jews and the Christians in this matter, which some people consider trivial. So what do you think about serious matters in which many of the people have been tested with imitating them and walking upon their path and way, like them imitating them in their clothing and customs. Them being proud to resemble them in their speech, food and drink. Them being happy and pleased to look at their filth such as vile speech, corrupt beliefs and disgraceful nude pictures.

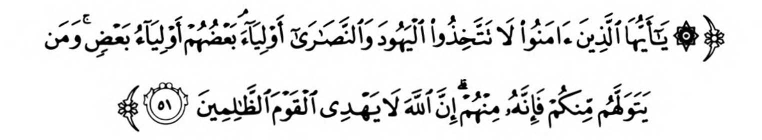
There is no doubt that imitation of them in that which is apparent leads to the agreement of the heart and its inclination towards them in one's inner self. Allāh said:

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[1] Collected by Muslim (no. 1096).

[2] Collected by Ibn Mājah (no. 1698).

[3] Collected by Abū Dāwūd (no. 2353) and al-Ḥākim (no. 1573).



> "O you who have believed, do not take the Jews and the Christians as allies. They are [in fact] allies of one another. And whoever is an ally to them among you - then indeed, he is [one] of them. Indeed, Allāh guides not the wrongdoing people." [Al-Mā'idah: 51]

The people affected the most by the issue of imitation [of the People of the Book] are the women and the youth. Let the fasting people pay attention to this. Let them take a lesson from this month. Let them be truthful with Allāh and let them be determined to abandon imitation of the People of the Book, because this will harm the individual, the society and this nation, all of them, and it affects the whole of the religion.

Shaykh al-Islām (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said, when discussing this *ḥadīth*:

> "This is a clear text showing that the manifestation of the religion that results from hastening to break the fast is due to opposing the Jews and the Christians. Therefore, if opposing them is a reason for the manifestation of the religion, then surely the purpose behind the sending of all the Messengers was for the religion of Allāh to be manifest over all religions. Thus, opposing them itself is from the greatest reasons behind the sending of the Prophet."[1]

[1] *Iqtidā al-Ṣirāt al-Mustaqīm* (1/209).

O Changer of hearts, make our hearts firm upon Your religion, grant us success to follow your legislation and grant us refuge from evil character, lusts and sicknesses.

Lesson 20
The Last Ten Nights

The blessed month of Ramaḍān is a blessing and a mercy, the entire month, its nights and days. The last ten nights are singled out with an additional excellence over the rest of its days and nights, as they are distinguished with magnificent and splendid virtues. For this reason, the Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions would show great regard for the last ten days and endeavor in them more than they would endeavor in other than them.

Imām Aḥmad related in his *Musnad* and Muslim in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* a *ḥadīth* narrated by 'Ā'ishah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا) who said:

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَجْتَهِدُ فِي الْعَشْرِ الْأَوَاخِرِ مَا لَا يَجْتَهِدُ فِي غَيْرِهِ

> "The Prophet (ﷺ) used to strive hard during the last ten days of Ramadan in a way that he did not strive at any other times."[1]

Bukharī and Muslim related from 'Ā'ishah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا):

كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا دَخَلَ الْعَشْرُ شَدَّ مِئْزَرَهُ، وَأَحْيَا لَيْلَهُ، وَأَيْقَظَ أَهْلَهُ

[1] Collected by Muslim (no. 1175) and Imām Aḥmad (no. 24409).

> "When the last ten (nights of Ramadan) began, he (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) would tighten his *Izār* (waist garment), give life to his night [i.e. stay awake at night in prayer] and wake his family."[1]

The meaning of "he (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) would tighten his *Izār*" is that he would strive and exert himself more in worship. He would stay away from his wives, so his only pleasure was privately speaking with his Lord and seeking to draw closer to Him. Thus, he was distracted from what Allāh permitted for him of sexual relations during the nights of Ramaḍān and preoccupied with worship and obedience, hoping to attain the reward of these ten nights and to successfully reach and benefit from the Night of Divine Decree.

The meaning of "[he would] give life to his night" is that while he was awake he was engaged in worship, so it kept him up. So he gave life to the whole night by remaining awake, drawing nearer to Allāh, calling upon Him and worshipping Him. This is because sleep is the brother of death, and the souls, bodies, time or lifespans are not truly alive except with the obedience of Allāh. This is real life.

He, the Most High, said:

﴿أَوَمَن كَانَ مَيْتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَٰهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُۥ نُورًا يَمْشِى بِهِۦ فِى ٱلنَّاسِ كَمَن مَّثَلُهُۥ فِى ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِّنْهَا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ زُيِّنَ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢٢﴾﴾

> "Is he who was dead (without Faith by ignorance and disbelief) and We gave him life (by knowledge and

[1] Collected by Bukharī (no. 2024) and Muslim (no. 1174). The wording is that related by Bukharī.

> Faith) and set for him a light (of Belief) whereby he can walk amongst men, like him who is in the darkness (of disbelief, polytheism and hypocrisy) from which he can never come out? Thus, it is made fair-seeming to the disbelievers that which they used to do." [Al-An'ām: 122]

He referred to these bodies as being dead, even though they walk the earth, eat and drink. This is due to them being far from faith and obedience to the Most Merciful, and them being engrossed in transgression, sins and offenses.

The meaning of "he would wake his family" is that he would wake them for prayer and worship during these nights. This is an example of his perfect care and concern for his family, fulfilling the obligation that Allāh has placed upon him and desiring to direct them to good, as the one who directs to good will receive the reward of the one who performs it. This is in addition to the reward that he would acquire from his own efforts and striving.

It is legislated for his nation to follow his footsteps and imitate him in this regard. This also contains a directive and encouragement to the fathers and mothers to give great concern to raising their children, and to show specific attention to them in this noble month. To monitor and observe them in their worship and to closely watch them. Furthermore, to encourage them to race to perform good deeds and to abandon the prohibitions, using the methods of inspiration and fear.

Ibn Ḥajr (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

> "In this *ḥadīth* is an encouragement to consistently pray during the last ten nights, pointing to an incentive to end it well. May Allāh grant us all a good ending, *Amīn.*"[1]

From that which distinguishes the last ten days [from the rest] is that the Prophet (ﷺ) used to perform *'I'tikāf* during them, and his companions performed *'I'tikāf* after him.

'I'tikāf is to remain in the Masjid to dedicate oneself to the worship of Allāh, and it is established as a Sunnah by the Book and the Sunnah.

He, the Most High, said:

﴿وَلَا تُبَٰشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَنتُمْ عَٰكِفُونَ فِى ٱلْمَسَٰجِدِ﴾

> "And do not have sexual relations with them (your wives) while you are in *'I'tikāf* the mosques." [Al-Baqarah: 187]

There comes in the two authentic collections [Bukharī and Muslim] a *ḥadīth* narrated by 'Ā'ishah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا) who said:

كَانَ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَعْتَكِفُ الْعَشْرَ الْأَوَاخِرَ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ
حَتَّى تَوَفَّاهُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ، ثُمَّ اعْتَكَفَ أَزْوَاجُهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ

[1] *Fatḥ al-Bārī* (4/270).

> "The Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) used to observe *'I'tikāf* during the last ten days of Ramaḍān until Allāh took his soul. Then his wives observed *'I'tikāf* after he was gone."[1]

Al-'Allāmah, Shaykh Ibn al-'Uthaymīn (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّٰهُ) elaborated upon some of the wisdoms of *'I'tikāf* in his renowned short sittings in the month of Ramaḍān, from which many have benefitted. May Allāh reward him with good for what he has put forth for Islām and the Muslims, shower him with his vast Mercy and record for him in this blessed month a reward like everyone who benefited from this book and his others works.

From that which is mentioned is his statement:

"The objective of *'I'tikāf* is for the Muslim to isolate himself from the people to focus on the obedience of Allāh in one of His Masajid, pursuing His reward and blessing, and striving to receive the [bounties] of the Night of Divine Decree.

This is why the one performing *'I'tikāf* should busy himself with the remembrance of Allāh, recitation of the Qur'ān, prayer and other forms of worship, and to forsake that which does not concern him, such as talking about worldly matters. It is allowed for him to talk about permissible things with his family and other than them, if it is for some benefit. This is based on the *ḥadīth* narrated by Ṣafīyah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّٰهُ عَنْهَا), the Mother of the believers who said:

[1] Bukharī (no. 2026) and Muslim (no. 1174).

كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مُعْتَكِفًا فَأَتَيْتُهُ أَزُورُهُ لَيْلًا فَحَدَّثْتُهُ ثُمَّ قُمْتُ لِأَنْقَلِبَ - أي : لأنصرف إلى بيتي - فَقَامَ - النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم – مَعِيَ...

"The Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) was performing *'I'tikāf* in the Masjid, and I went to visit him one evening. I spoke with him and then stood to go to my home, and the Prophet stood with me..."[1]

It is forbidden for the person performing *'I'tikāf* to have intercourse [with their spouse] and to indulge in any foreplay such as kissing and touching lustfully. This is due to the Saying of Allāh:

﴿وَلَا تُبَٰشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَنتُمْ عَٰكِفُونَ فِى ٱلْمَسَٰجِدِ﴾

"And do not have sexual relations with them (your wives) while you are in *'I'tikāf* the mosques." [Al-Baqarah: 187]"

As for leaving the Masjid, then if only part of his body [is outside of the Masjid], then this is allowed based on the *ḥadīth* narrated by 'Ā'ishah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهَا) who said:

كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُخْرِجُ رَأْسَهُ مِنْ الْمَسْجِدِ وَهُوَ مُعْتَكِفٌ فَأَغْسِلُهُ وَأَنَا حَائِضٌ

[1] Bukharī (no. 3281) and Muslim (no. 2175).

> "The Prophet (ﷺ) used to put his head outside the Masjid while he was in *'I'tikāf*, and I would wash it, and I was menstruating."[1]

In one narration:

كَانَتْ تُرَجِّلُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَهِيَ حَائِضٌ وَهُوَ مُعْتَكِفٌ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ وَهِيَ فِي حُجْرَتِهَا يُنَاوِلُهَا رَأْسَهُ

> "She would comb the Prophet's hair while she was menstruating. He was performing *'I'tikāf* in the Masjid and she was in her chamber, and he would stretch his head towards her."[2]

If the individual exits the Masjid with their entire body, then this is to be divided into three categories:

1. Leaving for something absolutely necessary, whether it is a religious matter or something relating to human nature, like relieving oneself of urine and excrement, obligatory *Wuḍū*, obligatory Ghusl due to sexual impurity or other than this, and to eat and drink. This is permissible if he is unable to do this in the Masjid. If he is able to do this in the Masjid, then he cannot leave, like if there are bathrooms in the Masjid where he can relieve himself and shower, or he has someone to bring him food and drink.

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[1] Bukharī (no. 2031) and Muslim (no. 297). The wording is that related by Bukhārī.

[2] Bukharī (no. 2046).

Then he cannot leave under such circumstances as there is no need.

2. Leaving to perform a righteous deed, which is not obligatory upon him, like visiting the sick, attending the Funeral and the like, then he must not leave the Masjid unless he stipulated this at the beginning of his *'I'tikāf*. For example, if he has a sick person who he must visit or he fears that they will soon die, and he stipulated that he will leave for this reason at the beginning of his *'I'tikāf*, then there is no problem with this.

3. Leaving the Masjid for something that opposes [the essence] of *'I'tikāf* like leaving to buy and sell, have relations and intercourse with his family and anything similar. He cannot do this, regardless of whether he stipulated this condition or not, because it contradicts *'I'tikāf* and the objective behind it."[1]

From that which distinguishes the last ten days and is specific to them is that therein lies the Night of Divine Decree. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

تَحَرَّوْا لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ فِي الْوِتْرِ مِنْ الْعَشْرِ الْأَوَاخِرِ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ

"Seek out the Night of Divine Decree in the odd nights of the last ten nights of Ramaḍān."[2]

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[1] *Majālis Shahr Ramaḍān*, p. 118-119.

[2] Collected by Bukhārī (no. 2017).

A discussion about this blessed night, its virtues, the importance of taking advantage of it and not wasting it will come next – if Allāh wills.

O Allāh, grant us success to perform what will lead to You being pleased with us, allow us to seal our month with righteous deeds and accept them from us – O Most Generous.

Lesson 21
The Night of Divine Decree

Indeed, Allāh is alone in creating and choosing, as He, the Most High, said:



> "And your Lord creates whatsoever He wills and chooses, no choice have they (in any matter). Glorified be Allāh , and exalted above all that they associate as partners (with Him)." [Al-Qaṣaṣ: 68]

The meaning of *al-Ikhtiyār* here [in this verse] is to choose and select. So Allāh, with His infinite wisdom and ability, and His perfect and all-encompassing knowledge, selects from His creation times, places and individuals. He singles them out with additional graces, much care and abundant blessings and kindness.

This – no doubt – is from the greatest signs of His Lordship, Oneness and perfect Attributes. It is from the clearest proofs of His infinite wisdom and ability, and that He creates and chooses whatsoever He wills, and that control of all things are in His Hand.

The decision of all matters, before and after, is solely with Allāh; He decrees for His creation whatever He wills and He governs them as He chooses.

﴿فَلِلَّهِ ٱلْحَمْدُ رَبِّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَرَبِّ ٱلْأَرْضِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَلَهُ ٱلْكِبْرِيَآءُ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٣٧﴾﴾

"So all the praises and thanks are to Allāh, the Lord of the heavens and the Lord of the earth, and the Lord of the creation. And His (Alone) is the Majesty in the heavens and the earth, and He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise." [Al-Jāthiyah: 36-37]

From those times that Allāh has singled out with an additional grace and abundant generosity:

- The month of Ramaḍān, as He made it superior to other months.

- The last ten nights of Ramaḍān as He made them superior to other nights.

- The Night of Divine Decree which, due to its elevated station with Him and abundant virtues, He made it superior to one thousand months. He emphasized its excellence, lofty station and importance when on this night, He revealed His clear revelation, noble Speech and sent down His wise Book, as a guidance for the pious, a criterion for the believers, and a light, mercy and brightness for the whole of the creation.

He, the Most High, said:

﴿ إِنَّآ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ فِى لَيْلَةٍ مُّبَٰرَكَةٍ ۚ إِنَّا كُنَّا مُنذِرِينَ ﴿٣﴾ فِيهَا يُفْرَقُ كُلُّ أَمْرٍ حَكِيمٍ
﴿٤﴾ أَمْرًا مِّنْ عِندِنَآ ۚ إِنَّا كُنَّا مُرْسِلِينَ ﴿٥﴾ رَحْمَةً مِّن رَّبِّكَ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ
﴿٦﴾ رَبِّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَآ ۖ إِن كُنتُم مُّوقِنِينَ ﴿٧﴾ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا
هُوَ يُحْىِۦ وَيُمِيتُ ۖ رَبُّكُمْ وَرَبُّ ءَابَآئِكُمُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٨﴾ ﴾

"We sent it (this Qur'ān) down on a blessed night in the month of Ramaḍān. Verily, We are ever warning. Therein (that night) is decreed every matter of ordainments. A Command from Us. Verily, We are ever sending (the Messengers), (as) a Mercy from your Lord. Verily, He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower. The Lord of the heavens and the earth and all that is between them, if you (but) have a faith with certainty. None has the right to be worshipped but He. It is He Who gives life and causes death, your Lord and the Lord of your fore-fathers." [Al-Dukhān: 3-8]

He (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ) said:

﴿ إِنَّآ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ فِى لَيْلَةِ ٱلْقَدْرِ ﴿١﴾ وَمَآ أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ ٱلْقَدْرِ ﴿٢﴾ لَيْلَةُ ٱلْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ
أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ ﴿٣﴾ تَنَزَّلُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ وَٱلرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِم مِّن كُلِّ أَمْرٍ ﴿٤﴾ سَلَٰمٌ هِىَ
حَتَّىٰ مَطْلَعِ ٱلْفَجْرِ ﴿٥﴾ ﴾

"Verily! We have sent it (this Qur'ān) down in the night of *Al-Qadr* (Decree). And what will make you know what the night of *Al-Qadr* (Decree) is? The night of *Al-Qadr* (Decree) is better than a thousand months (i.e.

> worshipping Allāh in that night is better than worshipping Him a thousand months, (i.e. 83 years and 4 months). Therein descend the angels and the *Ruḥ* [Jibrīl (Gabriel)] by Allāh 's Permission with all Decrees. Peace, until the appearance of dawn." [Al-Qadr: 1-5]

To Allāh belongs all praise. How excellent, important and illustrious a night, and how abundant are its blessings.

- One night is better than a thousand months. This means that it is better than thirty thousand nights. A thousand months is more than eighty-three years. This is a long lifespan, if the Muslim was to spend the whole of it in the obedience of Allāh. Thus, the Night of Divine Decree, which is one night, is better than this. This is an amazing virtue.

  Mujāhid said:

  "The Night of Divine Decree is better than a thousand months. There is no Night of Divine Decree in those months." Qatādah, al-Shāfiʿī and others mentioned something similar.

- In this noble Night the angels often descend due to the abundance of its blessing. The angels descend with the descent of blessings and mercy, as they descend when the Qur'ān is being recited and in sittings of knowledge.

- It is peace until the appearance of Fajr, meaning that it is entirely good and there is no evil therein until Fajr.

- On this night, every precise matter is made distinct, meaning that everything that will happen in that year is decreed by the will of Allāh, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise. The intent here is the yearly decree; as for the all-inclusive decree that is recorded in the Preserved Tablet, then this occurred fifty thousand years before the creation of the heavens and the earth, as found in authentic *aḥādīth*.

  It is authentically narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said:

  مَنْ قَامَ لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ

  > "Whoever stands in prayer on the Night of Divine Decree, truthfully out of sincere faith and hoping to attain Allāh's reward, all of his past sins will be forgiven."[1]

The Night of Divine Decree is definitely in the blessed month of Ramaḍān, due to His Saying:

﴿ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أُنزِلَ فِيهِ ٱلْقُرْءَانُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَٰتٍ مِّنَ ٱلْهُدَىٰ وَٱلْفُرْقَانِ ﴾

> "The month of Ramadan in which was revealed the Qur'ān, a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance and the criterion (between right and wrong)." [Al-Baqarah: 185]

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[1] Collected by al-Bukharī (no. 1901) and al-Nasā'ī (no. 2195).

Along with His Saying:

﴿إِنَّآ أَنزَلۡنَٰهُ فِي لَيۡلَةِ ٱلۡقَدۡرِ ١﴾

"Verily! We have sent it (this Qur'ān) down in the night of *Al-Qadr* (Decree)."

It is present in the last ten nights of Ramaḍān based on his saying (ﷺ):

تَحَرَّوْا لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ فِي الْعَشْرِ الْأَوَاخِرِ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ

"Seek out the Night of Divine Decree in the last ten nights of Ramaḍān."[1]

Seeking it out in the odd nights of the last ten is further recommended based on his saying (ﷺ):

الْتَمِسُوهَا فِي الْعَشْرِ الْأَوَاخِرِ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ فِي تَاسِعَةٍ تَبْقَى فِي سَابِعَةٍ تَبْقَى فِي خَامِسَةٍ تَبْقَى

"Look for it in the last ten nights of Ramaḍān. The Night of Divine Decree is on the night when nine or seven or five nights remain [out of the last ten nights of Ramaḍān]."[2]

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[1] Collected by Bukhārī (no. 2020) and Muslim (no. 1169).

[2] Collected by Bukhārī (no. 2021) and Muslim (no. 1165).

Ibn Ḥajr said in *al-Fatḥ*, under the chapter: Seeking the Night of Divine Decree in the Odd Nights of the Last Ten:

> "In this chapter heading is a clear indication that the strongest position is that the Night of Divine Decree is in Ramaḍān, specifically in the last ten of it, and furthermore in the odd nights of the last ten and not on a specific night. This what is established by all of the evidences on this matter."[1]

The scholars have mentioned that one of the wisdoms why the exact night of *Laylah al-Qadr* (Night of Divine Decree) is hidden and not specified in the texts is for the Muslims to strive in all of the last ten nights with the obedience of Allāh, the night prayer, the recitation of the Qur'ān and benevolence, so that the one who is enthusiastic and strives in pursuit of righteous actions can be differentiated from the lazy and sluggish.

This is because if the people knew the exact night of *Laylah al-Qadr* (Night of Divine Decree), then most of them would suffice by praying this night only and not the other nights. If they knew its exact location, it would not be a true test.

It is incumbent for all of us to strive as much as we can in pursuit of this blessed night, so that we can successfully acquire its rewards, seize its good and attain its recompense. Verily, the one who is deprived is the one who is deprived of its reward, and the one whom the seasons of forgiveness pass him by and he is still burdened by his sins due to his heedlessness, turning away and apathy.

[1] *Fatḥ al-Bārī* (4/29).

Ṭūba [glad tidings] for the one who earns the prizes of the successful during this night and walks upon the path of the righteous servants by standing in prayer and performing good deeds. Woe to the one who is expelled from these gates on this night and the curtain has closed on him, and this night has departed whilst he is engrossed in disobedience and sins. He is deluded by false dreams and wishful aspirations. He wastes the best of nights and the most superior of days. How great is his loss and how severe his regret!

The one who does not flourish on this noble night, then when will they flourish? The one who does not turn to Allāh at this honorable time, then when will they turn to Him? The one who is uninterested in performing good deeds on this night, then when will they act?

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

إِنَّ هَذَا الشَّهْرَ قَدْ حَضَرَكُمْ وَفِيهِ لَيْلَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ، مَنْ حُرِمَهَا فَقَدْ حُرِمَ الْخَيْرَ كُلَّهُ، وَلَا يُحْرَمُ خَيْرَهَا إِلَّا مَحْرُومٌ

> "This month has come to you, and in it there is a night that is better than a thousand months. Whoever is deprived of it, is deprived of all good. No one is deprived of its good except one who is truly deprived."[1]

It is highly recommended for the Muslim to make much supplication on this night, because the supplication is answered

[1] Collected by Ibn Mājah (no. 1644).

during this night. They should select the most comprehensive of supplications. Ibn Mājah related a *ḥadīth* from ʿĀ'ishah who said:

يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ وَافَقْتُ لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ مَا أَدْعُو ؟ قَالَ: تَقُولِينَ اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوٌّ تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّي

> "O Messenger of Allāh, if I find the Night of Divine Decree, then what should I supplicate with?" He replied (صَلَّىٰاللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ), "Say, 'O Allāh, verily, you are the Oft-Pardoning, You love to pardon, so pardon me.'"[1]

This supplication has a remarkable meaning and profound significance. It is certainly appropriate for this night, as it is the night in which every precise matter is made distinct and in which the actions of the servant for the whole year are decreed. Therefore, whoever is graced with wellbeing on this night and pardoned by their Lord has achieved ultimate success, and whoever is given wellbeing in this life and the Hereafter has achieved success. Nothing is equal to wellbeing.

Let us pursue the good of this night and its blessings through guarding the obligatory prayers, praying much during the night, giving *Zakāh*, giving charity, preserving the fast, performing many righteous deeds, staying away from disobedience and sins, showing remorse, repenting from sins and offenses, and making much remembrance of Allāh and recitation of the Qur'ān.

O Allāh, grant us success to stand in prayer on the Night of Divine Decree, make us of those who stand in prayer sincerely

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[1] Collected by Ibn Mājah (no. 3850).

and truthfully, hoping for Your reward, and pardon us. You are the Oft-Pardoning, Most Generous.

Lesson 22
The Devils Are Shackled During Ramaḍān

Another distinguishing characteristic of Ramaḍān is that the devils and rebellious Jinn are shackled during this month. Bukhārī and Muslim related a *ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ) said:

إِذَا دَخَلَ رَمَضَانُ فُتِّحَتْ أَبْوَابُ الْجَنَّةِ وَغُلِّقَتْ أَبْوَابُ جَهَنَّمَ وَسُلْسِلَتْ الشَّيَاطِينُ

"When the month of Ramaḍān comes, the gates of Paradise are opened and the gates of the Fire are closed, and the devils are chained."[1]

Aḥmad and al-Nasā'ī related a *ḥadīth* narrated by Anas b. Mālik (رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ) who said that Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ):

هَذَا رَمَضَانُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ تُفَتَّحُ فِيهِ أَبْوَابُ الْجَنَّةِ، وَتُغَلَّقُ فِيهِ أَبْوَابُ النَّارِ، وَتُسَلْسَلُ فِيهِ الشَّيَاطِينُ

"This is Ramaḍān, which has come to you. In it the gates of Paradise are opened, the gates of the Fire are closed and the devils are chained."[2]

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[1] Bukhārī (no. 3277) and Muslim (no. 1079).

[2] Sunan *al-Nasā'ī* (no. 2105) and *Musnad* (no. 13408).

Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah related a *ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

إِذَا كَانَ أَوَّلُ لَيْلَةٍ مِنْ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ صُفِّدَتِ الشَّيَاطِينُ وَمَرَدَةُ الْجِنِّ، وَغُلِّقَتْ أَبْوَابُ النَّارِ فَلَمْ يُفْتَحْ مِنْهَا بَابٌ، ثُمَّ فُتِحَتْ أَبْوَابُ الْجِنَانِ فَلَمْ يُغْلَقْ مِنْهَا بَابٌ، وَيُنَادِي مُنَادٍ: يَا بَاغِيَ الْخَيْرِ أَقْبِلْ، وَيَا بَاغِيَ الشَّرِّ أَقْصِرْ، وَلِلَّهِ عُتَقَاءُ مِنَ النَّارِ، وَذَلِكَ فِي كُلِّ لَيْلَةٍ

> "On the first night of the month of Ramaḍān, the devils and the rebellious Jinn are shackled, the gates of the Fire are closed and not a gate remains open, the gates of Paradise are opened and not a gate remains closed. A caller calls out, 'O seeker of good, come forth. O seeker of evil, halt.' Allāh emancipates a people from the Fire; and this is every night."[1]

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymīyah (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

> "The devils are chained, so their power and actions diminish due to them being chained. Therefore, they are unable to do in Ramaḍān what they do in other months. He did not say they are killed or that they died, rather he said, 'They are chained.' It still may be possible for the shackled devil to harm [the people] but the harm will be weaker and less than what occurs outside of Ramaḍān. Whoever's fast is complete, then it will repel

[1] Collected by al-Tirmidhī (no. 682) and Ibn Mājah (no. 1642). The wording here is that mentioned by al-Tirmidhī.

> the devil in a way that the one whose fast is deficient cannot."[1]

Many people today are ignorant or feign ignorance of the reality of the devil. They fail to grasp the extent of his plots and enmity towards the son of Adam, and his desire to banish them from the Mercy of Allāh and His Pleasure and to lure them into His Anger, Wrath and Fire.

He, the Most High, said:

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَٱتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًّا ۚ إِنَّمَا يَدْعُوا۟ حِزْبَهُۥ لِيَكُونُوا۟ مِنْ أَصْحَٰبِ ٱلسَّعِيرِ ﴿٦﴾ ﴾

> "Surely, the devil is an enemy to you, so take (treat) him as an enemy. He only invites his party that they may become the dwellers of the blazing Fire." [Al-Fāṭir: 6]

This enmity is continuous until the Day of Resurrection. Whoever is engaged in other than the obedience of Allāh in this noble month and instead is busy with the disobedience of Allāh, sins, amusement, play, staying awake [frivolously], gossip and watching the satellite channels and the poisons on them, then the devil has got to him and achieved his wish with him. Verily, the plots of the devil are endless.

Ibn al-Qayyim (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) mentions in his book *Igāthah al-Lahfān* a large number of tricks of the devil that he employs to deceive the servants of Allāh:

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[1] *Majmū' al-Fatāwá* of Ibn Taymīyah (25/246).

"From the plots of the devil is that he leads them to their destruction by making them believe that something is beneficial and then placing them in a predicament which ends in their ruin. Then he abandons and forsakes them, and he stands and rejoices at their misfortune, and laughs at them. He instructs them to steal, fornicate and murder, and then he reveals this and exposes them.

He, the Most High, said:

﴿ وَإِذْ زَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ وَقَالَ لَا غَالِبَ لَكُمُ الْيَوْمَ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَإِنِّي جَارٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ فَلَمَّا تَرَاءَتِ الْفِئَتَانِ نَكَصَ عَلَىٰ عَقِبَيْهِ وَقَالَ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِّنكُمْ إِنِّي أَرَىٰ مَا لَا تَرَوْنَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ ۚ وَاللَّهُ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٤٨﴾ ﴾

> "And (remember) when *Shayṭān* (Satan) made their (evil) deeds seem fair to them and said, 'No one of mankind can overcome you this Day (of the battle of Badr) and verily, I am your neighbor (for each and every help).' But when the two forces came in sight of each other, he ran away and said, 'Verily, I have nothing to do with you. Verily, I see what you see not. Verily, I fear Allāh for Allāh is Severe in punishment.'"

This is what he did to the polytheists, as when they were leaving for the battle Badr he appeared to them in the image of Surāqah b. Mālik and said, "I am your neighbor from the clan of Kinānah. No one can harm your families and offspring." When the enemy of Allāh saw the armies of Allāh from the angels descend to help

the Messenger of Allāh, he fled and left them [to their defeat], as Ḥassān said:

> "He led them with deceit, and then he deserted them. Verily, this despicable one will always deceive those who befriend him."

Similarly, he did the same thing to the monk who murdered the woman and her child. He commanded him to fornicate and then to kill her. He went on to direct her family to him and exposed his affair to them. Then he ordered the man to prostrate to him. When he did so, he fled and deserted him. Concerning him Allāh revealed the verse:

﴿ كَمَثَلِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ إِذْ قَالَ لِلْإِنسَٰنِ ٱكْفُرْ فَلَمَّا كَفَرَ قَالَ إِنِّى بَرِىٓءٌ مِّنكَ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ ٱللَّهَ رَبَّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ١٦ ﴾

> "(Their allies deceived them) like Shayṭān (Satan), when he says to man: 'Disbelieve in Allāh.' But when (man) disbelieves in Allāh, Shayṭān (Satan) says: 'I am free of you, I fear Allāh, the Lord of the creation." [Al-Ḥashr: 16]

The context here is not specific to the one about whom this story is mentioned. Rather, it is applicable to anyone who obeys the Shayṭān when he commands him with disbelief, so he can aid him and fulfil his need. Verily, then he will free himself from the individual and abandon him, as he will free himself from all his allies, every last one of them, in the Fire. He will say to them:

﴿إِنِّي كَفَرْتُ بِمَآ أَشْرَكْتُمُونِ مِن قَبْلُ﴾

"I deny your former act in associating me (Satan) as a partner with Allāh (by obeying me in the life of the world)." [Ibrāhīm: 22]

He led them to the evilest of places and then he totally freed himself from them.

From the plots of the enemy of Allāh is that he makes the believers afraid of his army and allies. Therefore, they do not struggle against them, and they do not enjoin the good nor forbid the evil. This is from his greatest plots against the people of faith, as Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) has informed us, Saying:

﴿إِنَّمَا ذَٰلِكُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ يُخَوِّفُ أَوْلِيَآءَهُۥ فَلَا تَخَافُوهُمْ وَخَافُونِ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٧٥﴾﴾

"It is only Shayṭān (Satan) that suggests to you the fear of his Awliyā [supporters and friends], so fear them not, but fear Me, if you are (true) believers." [Āl 'Imrān: 175]

The meaning of this with all of the scholars of Qur'ānic exegesis [*Tafsīr*] is that the Shayṭān makes you fear his allies. Qatādah explained this by saying,

'He makes them mighty and powerful in your hearts. Thus, Allāh Said, 'So fear them not, but fear Me, if you are (true) believers.' The stronger the faith of the servant, the more the fear of the devil's allies disappears from the heart. Conversely, the weaker the faith of the servant, the stronger the fear of them in his heart.'

From his plots is that he always bewitches the mind until he deceives the individual. None is safe from his magic save those whom Allāh wills. He beautifies to the individual an action that will harm him, until he thinks it is the most beneficial thing for him. He chases him from an action, which is the most beneficial of things for him, until he believes that it will harm him. *Lā Ilāha illa Allāh* (none has the right to be worshipped in truth except Allāh).

How many people have been trialed by this magic? How many times has this come between the heart and *Islām*, *Īmān* and *Iḥsān*? How many times has he promoted falsehood and presented it in a beautiful guise and demonized the truth and presented it in an awful image? How much falseness has he adorned [and thus fooled] the expert critics? How many counterfeits has he spread among the learned?

He is the one who bewitches the minds, throws their owners into various forms of desires and diverse opinions and lures them to all the paths of misguidance in every way possible. He leads them to perils and danger after danger. He beautified for them the worship of idols, severing of family ties, killing of daughters and marrying one's mother. He promises them gardens of Paradise regardless of their disbelief, sins and transgression.

He presents *Shirk* to them in the guise of respect [of the righteous], disbelief in the attributes of the Lord, His ascension over His throne and Him speaking with His Books in the guise of exonerating and freeing Allāh of deficiencies and imperfections; and the abandonment of enjoining the good and forbidding the evil in the guise of showing compassion to the

people, interacting with them with good manners and acting upon His Saying:

﴿عَلَيْكُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ لَا يَضُرُّكُم مَّن ضَلَّ﴾

> "Take care of your own selves, no hurt can come to you from those who are in error." [Al-Mā'idah: 105]

[He presents] turning away from what the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) came with in the guise of blind-following and sufficing with the opinion of someone more knowledgeable; and hypocrisy and dishonest compromise in the religion of Allāh in the guise of a socially apt intellect which will allow the individual to function and live among the people."[1]

This is the archenemy. His traits are apparent and his signs and characteristics are clear. He invites his party so that they end up becoming inhabitants of the blazing Fire of Hell, and he employs every means to achieve this.

Some of the *Salaf* have stated:

> "Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) has not commanded with any order except that the *Shayṭān* has two satanic insinuations concerning it: either extremism or negligence. The devil does not care through which of the two he is successful."

So let everyone look at their own soul and actions to see if they are answering the devil and [being caught] in his nets. Let them

[1] *Igāthah al-Lahfān* (1/125-128).

rectify their soul through repentance to Allāh and by forsaking the misguidance and evil they are involved in. Let them announce their enmity to this archenemy.

However, if they are under Allāh's protection and support, then let them thank Allāh for this, ask Him for firmness and strive to perform more good deeds.

The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) would often seek refuge with Allāh from the Shayṭān and teach his companions to do this.

﴿وَقُل رَّبِّ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ هَمَزَٰتِ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينِ ﴿٩٧﴾ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ رَبِّ أَن يَحْضُرُونِ ﴿٩٨﴾﴾

> "And say: 'My Lord! I seek refuge with You from the whisperings (suggestions) of the devils. And I seek refuge with You, My Lord! lest they may attend (or come near) me.'" [Al-Mu'minūn: 97-98]

O Allāh, we seek refuge with You from the accursed Shayṭān, from his coercion, lures to arrogance and poems.

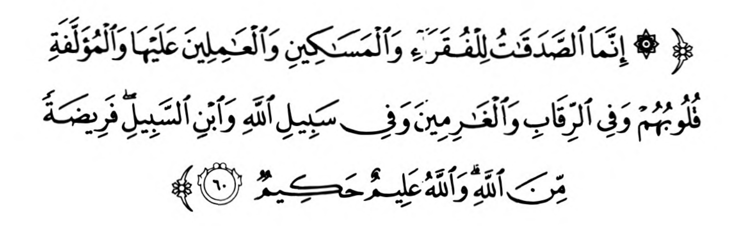
Lesson 23
Giving Zakāh and Spending in Charity

Ramaḍān is the month of righteous actions, blessings and pious deeds. It is the month of prayer and standing the night in prayer, the month of remembrance and recitation of the Qur'ān and the month of generosity, kindness, *Zakāh*, charity, benevolence and righteousness.

The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّىٰ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) was the most generous of the people and he was most generous in Ramaḍān. This is because fasting has a strong connection to spending and giving charity, as verily the rich when they refrain from food and drink for a set period of time, out of obedience to Allāh, they suffer from the heat of hunger and pain of thirst. This causes them to remember their Muslim brothers who experience these pains throughout the year or most of it.

Therefore, Allāh places in their hearts mercy towards their brothers, so their souls are generous, spending and giving wealth, whether it is the compulsory *Zakāh*, charity or recommended monetary duties in the various good causes.

As it relates to *Zakāh*, then Allāh has made it obligatory upon the believers who possess wealth upon which *Zakāh* is due to pay Zakāh to the needy from among them, for the overall general benefit. He, the Most High, said:



"*Zakāh* is only for the poor, needy, those employed to collect (the funds), to attract the hearts of those who have been inclined (towards Islam), and to free the captives, for those in debt, for Allāh's Cause, and for the wayfarer. A duty imposed by Allāh. And Allāh is All-Knower, All-Wise." [Al-Tawbah: 60]

In the Qur'ān, there are many commands to give *Zakāh* and spend from what Allāh has bestowed upon us, praise of those who spend and give charity and mention of their reward. There are also numerous *aḥādīth*, which reach the level of *Mutawātir*, that comprise of this.

He (ﷺ) explained what *Zakāh* is incumbent upon: livestock animals, grains, crops, currency [i.e. gold, silver and paper cash] and tradable assets. He mentioned the threshold amount after which *Zakāh* must be paid [*Niṣāb*] and the obligatory amount to be given. He mentioned the severe threat for the one who refuses to pay their *Zakāh*.

The Muslims unanimously agree on the deficiency of the faith, religion and Islām of the person who abandons *Zakāh*, but they differ concerning whether they disbelieve or not.

There are numerous benefits, both indispensable and supplementary, in giving *Zakāh*, charity and benevolence, as it pertains to this life and the Hereafter.

From these benefits:

- It is from the greatest of religious rites and clearest forms of faith. Verily, the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

  وَالصَّدَقَةُ بُرْهَانٌ

  "Charity is a proof."[1]

  This means that it is a proof for the faith of the one who gives it, his religion and his love of Allāh, because he was generous with his coveted wealth for the sake of Allāh.

- It purifies and increases the giver, the one whom it is given and the wealth it is taken from.

  As for the purification of the giver, then it purifies his character and cleanses it of stinginess, greed and ignoble traits. It develops his attributes, and it results in him possessing the attributes of the generous, benevolent and thankful. Verily, this is from the greatest forms of gratitude, and gratitude is always accompanied by growth and increase.

  Similarly, it increases his reward and recompense. *Zakāh* and charity are multiplied many times depending upon the faith and sincerity of the individual, and its benefit and use. It

[1] Collected by Muslim (no. 223).

brings happiness to the heart and delight to the soul. It repels from the servant many calamities and sicknesses.

How many religious and worldly blessings has it lead to? How many trials, sicknesses and unpleasant things has it repelled? How many pains has it relieved? How much enmity has it eliminated, and how much love and friendship has it fostered? How many answered supplications from truthful hearts has it resulted in?

It also increases the wealth it has been given from, as it shields it from harms and is a means for divine blessings to descend upon it. The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

مَا نَقَصَتْ صَدَقَةٌ مِنْ مَالٍ

"Wealth is not diminished by charity."[1]

Rather, it increases one's wealth.

He, the Most High, said:

﴿وَمَآ أَنفَقْتُم مِّن شَىْءٍ فَهُوَ يُخْلِفُهُۥ ۖ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ ٱلرَّٰزِقِينَ﴾

"And whatsoever you spend of anything (in Allāh 's Cause), He will replace it. And He is the Best of providers." [Al-Saba: 39]

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[1] Muslim (no. 2588).

He (ﷺ) said, as comes in the two authentic collections [Bukhārī and Muslim]:

مَا مِنْ يَوْمٍ يُصْبِحُ الْعِبَادُ فِيهِ إِلَّا مَلَكَانِ يَنْزِلَانِ فَيَقُولُ أَحَدُهُمَا: اللَّهُمَّ أَعْطِ مُنْفِقًا خَلَفًا، وَيَقُولُ الْآخَرُ اللَّهُمَّ أَعْطِ مُمْسِكًا تَلَفًا

"Every day two angels come down [from the heavens] and one of them says, 'O Allāh, compensate every person who spends in Your cause,' and the other angel says, 'O Allāh, destroy every miser.'"[1]

Reality bears witness to this, as it is rare to find a believer who pays his *Zakāh* and spends in beneficial causes, except that Allāh places blessing in his wealth and makes easy for him the means of sustenance.

There comes in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* a *ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) who said that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

بَيْنَا رَجُلٌ بِفَلَاةٍ مِنْ الْأَرْضِ ؛ فَسَمِعَ صَوْتًا فِي سَحَابَةٍ : اسْقِ حَدِيقَةَ فُلَانٍ ، فَتَنَحَّى ذَلِكَ السَّحَابُ فَأَفْرَغَ مَاءَهُ فِي حَرَّةٍ ، فَإِذَا شَرْجَةٌ مِنْ تِلْكَ الشِّرَاجِ قَدْ اسْتَوْعَبَتْ ذَلِكَ الْمَاءَ كُلَّهُ ، فَتَتَبَّعَ الْمَاءَ فَإِذَا رَجُلٌ قَائِمٌ فِي حَدِيقَتِهِ يُحَوِّلُ الْمَاءَ بِمِسْحَاتِهِ فَقَالَ لَهُ : يَا عَبْدَ اللَّهِ مَا اسْمُكَ قَالَ فُلَانٌ لِلِاسْمِ الَّذِي سَمِعَ فِي السَّحَابَةِ ، فَقَالَ لَهُ يَا عَبْدَ اللَّهِ لِمَ تَسْأَلُنِي عَنْ اسْمِي ؟ فَقَالَ إِنِّي سَمِعْتُ صَوْتًا فِي السَّحَابِ الَّذِي هَذَا مَاؤُهُ يَقُولُ: اسْقِ حَدِيقَةَ فُلَانٍ لِاسْمِكَ فَمَا تَصْنَعُ فِيهَا؟ قَالَ أَمَّا إِذْ قُلْتَ هَذَا فَإِنِّي أَنْظُرُ إِلَى مَا يَخْرُجُ مِنْهَا فَأَتَصَدَّقُ بِثُلُثِهِ وَآكُلُ أَنَا وَعِيَالِي ثُلُثًا وَأَرُدُّ فِيهَا

[1] Bukhārī (no. 1442) and Muslim (no. 1010).

ثُلُثَهُ))، وفي رواية له ((وَأَجْعَلُ ثُلُثَهُ فِي الْمَسَاكِينِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ

"While a person was in the wilderness, he heard a voice from the cloud (saying), 'Irrigate the garden of so and so.' The clouds then moved along and poured its water on a stony ground, and it filled a channel amongst the channels of that land. This person followed that water, and he found a person standing in the garden busy in diverting the course of water with the help of a shovel. He said to him, O servant of Allāh, what is your name?' He said, 'So and so.' It was the very name which he had heard from the clouds. He said to him, 'O servant of Allāh, why do you ask me my name?' He said, 'I heard a voice from the clouds from which this water came, saying, 'Irrigate the garden of so and so,' and it was your name. So what do you do with it [i.e. your garden]?' He said, 'As you have mentioned this, I look at what yield I get from it and I give one-third in charity, I and my family eat one-third and one-third I return to it [for crops and investment].'"

In one narration:

"I give a third to the needy, beggars and the wayfarer."[1]

As for its benefit to the one whom it is given, then Allāh commands that it be paid to the destitute from the poor and needy, those in debt, to free captives and for the benefits of

[1] Muslim (no. 2984).

the Muslims in accordance to what is stated in the aforementioned verse. Hence, when it is spent in its proper place the needs and necessities are fulfilled, the poor are sufficed or their poverty is lessened, and the general public benefits are established.

What benefit is greater and more important than this? If the rich paid the *Zakāh* due on their wealth and spent it in its rightful place, then the worldly and religious benefits would be established, the necessities would be met, the harms of the poor would be repelled and it would be the most effective impediment to block and prevent the crimes of those who spread corruption.

For this reason, *Zakāh* is from the most remarkable virtues of Islām, due to it comprising the realization of abundant benefits and advantages, and it repelling [various] harms.

From that which is mentioned about the punishment for those who abandon paying *Zakāh* is His Saying:

﴿ ۞ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِنَّ كَثِيرٗا مِّنَ ٱلۡأَحۡبَارِ وَٱلرُّهۡبَانِ لَيَأۡكُلُونَ
أَمۡوَٰلَ ٱلنَّاسِ بِٱلۡبَٰطِلِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِۗ وَٱلَّذِينَ
يَكۡنِزُونَ ٱلذَّهَبَ وَٱلۡفِضَّةَ وَلَا يُنفِقُونَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَبَشِّرۡهُم
بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٖ ﴿٣٤﴾ يَوۡمَ يُحۡمَىٰ عَلَيۡهَا فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ فَتُكۡوَىٰ بِهَا
جِبَاهُهُمۡ وَجُنُوبُهُمۡ وَظُهُورُهُمۡۖ هَٰذَا مَا كَنَزۡتُمۡ لِأَنفُسِكُمۡ فَذُوقُواْ مَا كُنتُمۡ
تَكۡنِزُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ ﴾

"O you who believe! Verily, there are many of the rabbis and the monks who devour the wealth of mankind in falsehood, and hinder (them) from the Way of Allāh. And those who hoard up gold and silver, and spend it not in the Way of Allāh. Announce unto them a painful torment. On the Day when it will be heated in the Fire of Hell and with it will be branded their foreheads, their flanks, and their backs, (and it will be said unto them), 'This is the treasure which you hoarded for yourselves. Now taste of what you used to hoard.'" [Al-Tawbah: 34-35]

Bukhārī related a ḥadīth from Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

مَنْ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ مَالًا فَلَمْ يُؤَدِّ زَكَاتَهُ مُثِّلَ لَهُ مَالُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ شُجَاعًا أَقْرَعَ لَهُ زَبِيبَتَانِ يُطَوَّقُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ يَأْخُذُ بِلِهْزِمَتَيْهِ -يَعْنِي بِشِدْقَيْهِ- ثُمَّ يَقُولُ: أَنَا مَالُكَ، أَنَا كَنْزُكَ ثُمَّ تَلَا: {وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَبْخَلُونَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ هُوَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ بَلْ هُوَ شَرٌّ لَهُمْ سَيُطَوَّقُونَ مَا بَخِلُوا بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ} الآية

"Whoever is made wealthy by Allāh and does not pay the Zakāh of his wealth, then on the Day of Resurrection his wealth will be made like a bald-headed poisonous male snake with two black spots over the eyes. The snake will encircle his neck and bite his cheeks and say, 'I am your wealth, I am your treasure.' Then the Prophet recited the verses,

﴿ وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَبْخَلُونَ بِمَآ ءَاتَىٰهُمُ ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ هُوَ خَيْرًا لَّهُم ۖ بَلْ هُوَ شَرٌّ لَّهُمْ ۖ سَيُطَوَّقُونَ مَا بَخِلُوا۟ بِهِۦ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ ۗ ﴾

'And let not those who covetously withhold of that which Allāh has bestowed on them of His Bounty (wealth) think that it is good for them (and so they do not pay the obligatory *Zakāh*). Nay, it will be worse for them; the things which they covetously withheld shall be tied to their necks like a collar on the Day of Resurrection. ...' [Āl 'Imrān: 180][1]

If Allāh grants the slave success to pay his *Zakāh* or give charity in the path of Allāh, then let him be wary of showing off, the desire for fame and reminders of generosity or harm, as these things nullify the reward and may result in sin. He, the Most High, said:

﴿ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تُبْطِلُوا۟ صَدَقَـٰتِكُم بِٱلْمَنِّ وَٱلْأَذَىٰ ﴾

"O you who believe! Do not render in vain your (charity) by reminders of your generosity or by injury." [Al-Baqarah: 264]

O Allāh, we seek refuge with You from wealth that does not bring us closer to you, and we ask You for purification of our souls and hearts from stinginess, greed and all the sicknesses of the heart. We ask Allāh to record for those who spend [for His

[1] Bukhārī (no. 1403).

sake] and give charity their reward and grant them a grand recompense.

Lesson 24
The Gravity of Evil Speech and Actions

Bukhārī related in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* a *ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

مَنْ لَمْ يَدَعْ قَوْلَ الزُّورِ وَالْعَمَلَ بِهِ فَلَيْسَ لِلَّهِ حَاجَةٌ فِي أَنْ يَدَعَ طَعَامَهُ وَشَرَابَهُ

> "Whoever does not give up evil speech and acting upon it, then Allāh is not in need of him leaving food and drink."[1]

Fasting has been legislated by Allāh for their souls to be refined and their manners to be corrected, for them to attain piety and for their hearts, limbs and tongues to become pure. The believer in Allāh strives and endeavors to preserve his heart, tongues and limbs from anything that angers Allāh and earns His wrath.

He asks Allāh and he implements the necessary means which will cause his heart to contain faith, *Tawḥīd*, sincerity and the other righteous actions of the heart. His limbs to carryout righteous deeds or permissible actions, as it relates to what he hears, sees, touches, works towards, utilizes and consumes of food, drink, clothing and other than this. His tongue, which is the interpreter of his heart and narrator of what it conceals, to not engage in anything unless it pleases Allāh like the remembrance of Allāh, recitation of the Qur'ān and lawful speech.

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[1] Bukhārī (no. 1903).

The heart is the chief of the tongue and all the limbs. If it is sound, then the tongue will be sound, so it will not utter except good, and the limbs will be sound and not perform except good. As for those things that anger Allāh like all forms of disobedience, lying, false testimony, backbiting, tale-carrying, abuse, insults and that which is similar, which are committed by the tongues and limbs, then it utterly flees from them and greatly fears falling into them, because it knows their danger and evil outcome.

Furthermore, the sins committed by the tongue are reasons for the destruction of many people, them being deprived of Paradise and them ending up in the Fire. Examples of these sins which are a means to destruction are: evil speech and actions, backbiting, tale-carrying, deceit, abuse, sins and that which is similar, which totally oppose the benefits for which fasting was prescribed.

Whoever's tongue does not refrain [*Ṣawm*] from these shameful acts and does not benefit from refraining from lawful things during the fast nor refraining from forbidden matters such as lying, evil speech, backbiting, tale-carrying, deceit, abuse and insults, then when will he benefit?

The harvests of the tongue lead the individual to dangerous places, destroy and ruin him. Towards the end of the *ḥadīth* comprising of the Prophet's (ﷺ) advice to Muʿādh, he (ﷺ) said:

أَلَا أُخْبِرُكَ بِمَلَاكِ ذَلِكَ كُلِّهِ؟ قُلْتُ بَلَى يَا نَبِيَّ اللَّهِ، فَأَخَذَ بِلِسَانِهِ قَالَ: كُفَّ عَلَيْكَ هَذَا، فَقُلْتُ يَا نَبِيَّ اللَّهِ وَإِنَّا لَمُؤَاخَذُونَ بِمَا نَتَكَلَّمُ بِهِ؟ فَقَالَ ثَكِلَتْكَ أُمُّكَ يَا مُعَاذُ وَهَلْ يَكُبُّ النَّاسَ فِي النَّارِ عَلَى وُجُوهِهِمْ أَوْ عَلَى مَنَاخِرِهِمْ إِلَّا حَصَائِدُ أَلْسِنَتِهِمْ

> "Shall I not tell you what is the foundation of all that?" I [Mu'ādh] said, "O Prophet of Allāh, will we be held responsible for what we utter with it?" He said, "May your mother be bereft of you, O Mu'ādh! Will the people be thrown into Hell on their faces or on their noses for anything other than the harvest of their tongues?"[1]

Ibn Rajab (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

> "'The meaning of the 'harvest of the tongues' is the recompense and punishments for forbidden speech. Verily, a person through his speech and actions sows good and bad deeds on the Day of Judgment, then he harvests what he has planted. Whoever sowed good, whether speech or action, will reap nobility; and whoever sowed evil, whether speech or action, will reap regret and sorrow.
>
> The apparent wording of the *ḥadīth* of Mu'ādh indicates that the main thing to enter the people into the Fire is what they pronounce upon their tongues, as disobedience of the tongue includes *Shirk* [associating partners with Allāh], which is the greatest sin with Allāh, and it also includes speaking about Allāh without knowledge, which is associated with *Shirk*. It includes false testimony, which was mentioned along with associating partners with Allāh.

[1] Al-Tirmidhī (no. 2616) and Ibn Mājah (no. 3973). The wording is that mentioned by al-Tirmidhī.

> It includes magic and slander, and other affairs, from the major and minor sins, such as lying, backbiting and tale-carrying. Similarly, all other forms of disobedience – the majority of the time – are linked to a statement that promotes them."[1]

So it is obligatory upon us all to desist from evil speech, false testimony, backbiting, and tale-carrying, in this month of ours and at all times, and to preserve our tongues from all forbidden and disgraceful speech, because the harvest of the tongues is catastrophic, and its punishment with Allāh is severe.

As for evil speech, then Allāh mentioned it along with *Shirk* in His Saying:

﴿فَٱجْتَنِبُوا۟ ٱلرِّجْسَ مِنَ ٱلْأَوْثَٰنِ وَٱجْتَنِبُوا۟ قَوْلَ ٱلزُّورِ﴾

> "So shun the abomination (worshipping) of idols, and shun lying speech (false statements)." [Al-Hajj: 30]

Imām Aḥmad and al-Tirmidhī related that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) stood and gave a sermon, saying:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ عَدَلَتْ شَهَادَةُ الزُّورِ إِشْرَاكًا بِاللَّهِ ثَلَاثًا ثُمَّ قَرَأَ: {فَاجْتَنِبُوا الرِّجْسَ مِنَ الْأَوْثَانِ وَاجْتَنِبُوا قَوْلَ الزُّورِ}

"O mankind, false testimony has been mentioned along with associating partners with Allāh. Then he recited,

[1] *Jāmi' al-'Ulūm Wa al-Ḥikam*, p. 147.

﴿فَٱجۡتَنِبُواْ ٱلرِّجۡسَ مِنَ ٱلۡأَوۡثَٰنِ وَٱجۡتَنِبُواْ قَوۡلَ ٱلزُّورِ﴾

'So shun the abomination (worshipping) of idol, and shun lying speech (false statements). [Al-Hajj: 30]'"[1]

There comes a *ḥadīth* in the two authentic collections upon the authority of Abu Bakrah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

أَلَا أُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِأَكْبَرِ الْكَبَائِرِ ثَلَاثًا قَالُوا بَلَى يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ قَالَ الْإِشْرَاكُ بِاللَّهِ وَعُقُوقُ الْوَالِدَيْنِ وَجَلَسَ وَكَانَ مُتَّكِئًا فَقَالَ أَلَا وَقَوْلُ الزُّورِ قَالَ فَمَا زَالَ يُكَرِّرُهَا حَتَّى قُلْنَا لَيْتَهُ سَكَتَ

"Should I not inform you of the greatest of the major sins?" Three times. They said, "Yes, O Messenger of Allāh." He said, "To join others in worship with Allāh and to be undutiful to one's parents." The Prophet then sat up after he had been reclining (on a pillow) and said, "And I warn you against giving a false testimony." He kept on saying that warning till we thought he would not stop.[2]

As for backbiting, then Allāh said concerning it:

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[1] *Al-Musnad* (no. 16943) and al-Tirmidhī (no. 2299).

[2] Bukhārī (no. 2654) and Muslim (no. 87).

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱجْتَنِبُوا۟ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ ٱلظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ ٱلظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ ۖ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا۟ وَلَا يَغْتَب بَّعْضُكُم بَعْضًا ۚ أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ ۚ﴾

"O you who believe! Avoid much suspicions, indeed some suspicions are sins. And spy not, neither backbite one another. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You would hate it (so hate backbiting)." [Al-Ḥujurāt: 12]

As for tale-carrying, then Prophet (ﷺ) said:

لَا يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ قَتَّاتٌ

"The *Qattāt* [tale-carrier] will not enter Paradise."[1]

This is referring to the tale-carrier.

As for lying, then it is the basis of all wickedness. The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

إِنَّ الْكَذِبَ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْفُجُورِ، وَإِنَّ الْفُجُورَ يَهْدِي إِلَى النَّارِ

"Lying leads to wickedness, and wickedness leads to the Fire. A man may keep on telling lies till he is written before Allāh, a liar."[2]

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[1] Bukhārī (no. 6056) and Muslim (no. 105).

[2] Bukhārī (no. 6094) and Muslim (no. 2607).

This is because it leads to all acts of disobedience committed by the tongue and the other body parts. All righteous actions, whether hidden or apparent, stem from truthfulness, and all corrupt actions, whether hidden or apparent, stem from lies.

Allāh punishes the liar by deterring and discouraging him from things which are beneficial and advantageous for him. He rewards the truthful by granting him success to carry out what is beneficial for him in this life and the Hereafter.

Nothing brings about benefit as it relates to this world and the Hereafter like truthfulness, and [nothing brings about] corruption and harm like lying. That is why Allāh said:

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَكُونُوا۟ مَعَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ ١١٩ ﴾

> "O you who believe! Be afraid of Allāh, and be with those who are true (in words and deeds)."
>
> [Al-Tawbah: 119]

Therefore, it is obligatory upon the Muslim to guard his tongue from all of this, so that he can complete his Islām, perfect his faith, protect his religion, and achieve entrance into Paradise and security and safety from the Fire. 'Abdullah b. 'Amr narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

الْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلِمَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَيَدِهِ

"The Muslim is the one whom the Muslims are safe from his tongue and hands"[1]

He (ﷺ) said:

مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلْيَقُلْ خَيْرًا أَوْ لِيَصْمُتْ

"Whoever believes in Allāh and the Last Day, then let him speak good or remain silent."[2]

Bukhārī related a *ḥadīth* narrated by Sahl b. Sʿad who said that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

مَنْ يَضْمَنْ لِي مَا بَيْنَ لَحْيَيْهِ وَمَا بَيْنَ رِجْلَيْهِ أَضْمَنْ لَهُ الْجَنَّةَ

"Whoever can guarantee for me what is between his two jawbones [i.e. the tongue] and his two legs, then I guarantee for him Paradise."[3]

The intent here is the private parts and the tongue.

In Bukhārī and Muslim – and the wording is that related by Muslim – there is a *ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah who said that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

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[1] Bukhārī (no. 10) and Muslim (no. 41).

[2] Bukhārī (no. 6018) and Muslim (no. 47).

[3] Al-Bukhārī (no. 6474).

إِنَّ الْعَبْدَ لَيَتَكَلَّمُ بِالْكَلِمَةِ مَا يَتَبَيَّنُ مَا فِيهَا يَهْوِي بِهَا فِي النَّارِ أَبْعَدَ مَا بَيْنَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ

"The servant speaks words that he does not understand their repercussions, but he plunges into the Fire farther than the distance between the east and the west."

Muslim related a *ḥadīth* in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* narrated by Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

أَتَدْرُونَ مَا الْمُفْلِسُ؟ قَالُوا الْمُفْلِسُ فِينَا مَنْ لَا دِرْهَمَ لَهُ وَلَا مَتَاعَ، فَقَالَ إِنَّ الْمُفْلِسَ مِنْ أُمَّتِي يَأْتِي يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ بِصَلَاةٍ وَصِيَامٍ وَزَكَاةٍ وَيَأْتِي قَدْ شَتَمَ هَذَا وَقَذَفَ هَذَا وَأَكَلَ مَالَ هَذَا وَسَفَكَ دَمَ هَذَا وَضَرَبَ هَذَا؛ فَيُعْطَى هَذَا مِنْ حَسَنَاتِهِ وَهَذَا مِنْ حَسَنَاتِهِ، فَإِنْ فَنِيَتْ حَسَنَاتُهُ قَبْلَ أَنْ يُقْضَى مَا عَلَيْهِ أُخِذَ مِنْ خَطَايَاهُمْ فَطُرِحَتْ عَلَيْهِ ثُمَّ طُرِحَ فِي النَّارِ

"Do you know who the bankrupt one is?" They said, "The bankrupt among us is the one who has no wealth nor assets." He said, "The individual who is bankrupt from my nation will come on the Day of Judgement with prayer, fasting, and *Zakāh*. Surely he has abused this one, accused this one of fornication, consumed the wealth of this one, shed the blood of this one and beaten this one. This person will be given his good deeds and another will be given from his good deeds. If all his good deeds are exhausted before he has settled [his wrongs], then their evil deeds will be taken from them

and thrown upon him. Then he will be cast into the Fire."[1]

We ask Allāh for wellbeing and safety. We ask Him to preserve for us our tongues and our limbs, and to guide us to the straight path.

[1] Muslim (no. 2581).

Lesson 25
Paradise Is the Abode of the Righteous

Bukhārī and Muslim related a *ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

إِذَا دَخَلَ رَمَضَانُ فُتِّحَتْ أَبْوَابُ الْجَنَّةِ وَغُلِّقَتْ أَبْوَابُ جَهَنَّمَ وَسُلْسِلَتْ الشَّيَاطِينُ

> "When the month of Ramaḍān comes, the gates of Paradise are opened and the gates of the Fire are closed, and the devils are chained."[1]

Paradise is the Mercy of Allāh which He bestows upon those whom He wills of His servants. It is the abode of peace with which He blesses the Prophets, truthful, martyrs and the righteous.

Rivers flow under it. Its bricks are made of gold and silver. Its mortar is of fragrant musk. Its pebbles are pearls and rubies, and its soil is saffron. Its tents are made from hollowed-out pearls. It is sparkling light, wavering sweet basil, a flowing river, ripe fruits and beautiful wives.

In it are thornless lote-trees, banana trees layered with fruit, extended shade and water flowing constantly. Its inhabitants will eat therein, and they will live in luxury. They will not defecate,

[1] Bukhārī (no. 3277) and Muslim (no. 1079). The wording is that related by Bukhārī.

urinate or blow their noses; rather, it will be emitted as musk. They will live forever and not die, and they will remain as youth and never become old.

Their faces will be bright, laughing and rejoicing at good news. Their features will be strikingly beautiful. In it there are wives from the fair women [of Paradise] with large, [beautiful] eyes. All its bliss is eternal, and everything which exists there is remarkable [and better than what is known]. In it the veil is lifted and the believers will look at the Face of the All Mighty, the True Bestower.

No matter how much the people articulately attempt to describe the essence of Paradise and its bliss, they will never be able. It is superior to what can be imagined by the imaginations and greater than what comes to mind. Bukhārī and Muslim related a *ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

قَالَ اللَّهُ عز وجل: أَعْدَدْتُ لِعِبَادِي الصَّالِحِينَ مَا لَا عَيْنٌ رَأَتْ وَلَا أُذُنٌ سَمِعَتْ وَلَا خَطَرَ عَلَى قَلْبِ بَشَرٍ فَاقْرَءُوا إِنْ شِئْتُمْ: {فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَا أُخْفِيَ لَهُمْ مِنْ قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ}

> "Allāh said, 'I have prepared for My pious slaves things which have never been seen by an eye, or heard by an ear, or imagined by a human being.' If you wish, you can recite this verse, 'No soul knows what is kept

hidden for them of joy as a reward for what they used to do.'"[1]

The people of Paradise will enter group by group. He, the Most High, said:

﴿ وَسِيقَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوْا۟ رَبَّهُمْ إِلَى ٱلْجَنَّةِ زُمَرًا ﴾

"And those who kept their duty to their Lord will be led to Paradise in groups." [Al-Zumar: 73]

In Bukhārī and Muslim there comes a *ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

أَوَّلَ زُمْرَةٍ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ عَلَى صُورَةِ الْقَمَرِ لَيْلَةَ الْبَدْرِ، وَالَّذِينَ يَلُونَهُمْ عَلَى أَشَدِّ كَوْكَبٍ دُرِّيٍّ فِي السَّمَاءِ إِضَاءَةً، لَا يَبُولُونَ وَلَا يَتَغَوَّطُونَ وَلَا يَمْتَخِطُونَ وَلَا يَتْفُلُونَ، أَمْشَاطُهُمُ الذَّهَبُ، وَرَشْحُهُمُ الْمِسْكُ وَمَجَامِرُهُمُ الْأَلُوَّةُ، وَأَزْوَاجُهُمُ الْحُورُ الْعِينُ، أَخْلَاقُهُمْ عَلَى خُلُقِ رَجُلٍ وَاحِدٍ، عَلَى صُورَةِ أَبِيهِمْ آدَمَ سِتُّونَ ذِرَاعًا فِي السَّمَاءِ

"The first group of people who will enter Paradise will be glittering like the full moon, and those who follow them will glitter like the most brilliant star in the sky. They will not urinate, relieve nature, spit or have any nasal secretions. Their combs will be of gold, and their sweat will smell like musk. The aloes-wood will be used

[1] Bukhārī (no. 3244) and Muslim (no. 282). The wording is that related by Bukhārī.

in their braziers. Their wives will be al-*Ḥūr al-ʿĪn*. All of them will look alike and will resemble their father Adam (in statute), sixty cubits tall."[1]

It is established in the Sunnah that Paradise has eight gates. Imām Aḥmad related in his *Musnad* a *ḥadīth* narrated by Laqīṭ b. ʿĀmir when he visited the Prophet (ﷺ) as part of a delegation, and it is mentioned within it:

وَإِنَّ لِلْجَنَّةِ لَثَمَانِيَةَ أَبْوَابٍ مَا بِنْهُمَا بَابَانِ إِلَّا يَسِيرُ الرَّاكِبُ بَيْنَهُمَا سَبْعِينَ عَامًا

"Verily, in Paradise there are eight gates. There are not two gates except that it takes the rider seventy years to travel between them."[2]

One of these gates is known as *al-Rayyān*, which no one can enter except those who observed the fast, and this was discussed in the previous sittings along with the evidences relating to this. As for the other gates, then some of them have been named in the *ḥadīth* found in the two authentic collections narrated by Abū Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said:

مَنْ أَنْفَقَ زَوْجَيْنِ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ نُودِيَ مِنْ أَبْوَابِ الْجَنَّةِ يَا عَبْدَ اللَّهِ هَذَا خَيْرٌ ، فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الصَّلَاةِ دُعِيَ مِنْ بَابِ الصَّلَاةِ ، وَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجِهَادِ دُعِيَ مِنْ بَابِ الْجِهَادِ ، وَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الصِّيَامِ دُعِيَ

[1] Bukhārī (no. 3327) and Muslim (no. 2834).

[2] *Al-Musnad* (no. 16155).

مِنْ بَابِ الرَّيَّانِ ، وَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الصَّدَقَةِ دُعِيَ مِنْ بَابِ الصَّدَقَةِ ، فَقَالَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ بِأَبِي أَنْتَ وَأُمِّي يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَا عَلَى مَنْ دُعِيَ مِنْ تِلْكَ الْأَبْوَابِ مِنْ ضَرُورَةٍ فَهَلْ يُدْعَى أَحَدٌ مِنْ تِلْكَ الْأَبْوَابِ كُلِّهَا ؟ قَالَ نَعَمْ وَأَرْجُو أَنْ تَكُونَ مِنْهُمْ

"Whoever gives two kinds (of things or property) in charity for Allāh's Cause, will be called from the gates of Paradise and will be addressed, 'O slave of Allāh, here is prosperity.' So, whoever was amongst the people who used to offer their prayers, will be called from the gate of the prayer; and whoever was amongst the people who used to participate in *Jihād*, will be called from the gate of Jihad. Whoever was amongst those who used to observe the fast, will be called from the gate of *al-Rayyān*. Whoever was amongst those who used to give in charity, will be called from the gate of charity." Abu Bakr said, "Let my parents be sacrificed for you, O Messenger of Allāh, no distress or need will befall him who will be called from those gates, so will there be any one who will be called from all these gates?" The Prophet replied, "Yes, and I hope you will be one of them."[1]

Ibn al-Qayyim (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

"Due to the lofty aspirations of Ṣiddīq [Abū Bakr] to perfect the levels of faith and his soul yearning to be called from all of the gates of Paradise, he asked the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) will there be anyone

[1] Bukhārī (no. 3666) and Muslim (no. 1027).

from the people who will attain this. So that he could endeavor to perform the action through which this is achieved.

The Prophet (ﷺ) informed him that this will occur and he gave him glad tidings that he is among those people. It is as if he said, 'Will anyone perfect these levels, so that they will be called from all of these gates on the Day of Resurrection?' To Allāh belongs all praise, for how lofty is this aspiration and how great is this level of resolution."[1]

Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajr (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

"In this *ḥadīth* is a subtle indication of the small number of people to be called from all of these gates. It also alludes to the fact that the intent here is the supererogatory acts of these forms of worship mentioned in the *ḥadīth*, not the obligations, as many people perform all of these obligations.

In opposition to the supererogatory deeds, as very few people perform all forms of these supererogatory actions. Furthermore, the one who observes all of this will be called from all of the gates of Paradise as an honor for him, but he will only enter through one gate. Perhaps it will be the gate of the action which he performed the most – and Allāh knows best."[2]

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[1] *Hādī al-Arwāḥ*, p. 222.

[2] *Fatḥ al-Bārī* (7/35), under the discussion of *ḥadīth* (no. 3666).

The pleasures of the people of Paradise never come to an end and their bliss does not cease.

﴿أُكُلُهَا دَآئِمٌ وَظِلُّهَا﴾

"Its provision is eternal and so is its shade." [Al-R'ad: 35]

The greatest enjoyment of the people of Paradise and the most gratifying of it is them seeing Allāh and looking at Him in Paradise. He, the Most High, said:

﴿لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا۟ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ﴾

"For those who have done good is the best and even more [*Ziyādah*]." [Yūnus: 26]

He, the Most High, said:

﴿وَلَدَيْنَا مَزِيدٌ﴾

"And We have more [*Mazīd*]." [Qāf: 35]

The words *Ziyādah* and *Mazīd* have been explained to mean seeing Allāh in Paradise.

There comes in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* a *ḥadīth* narrated by Suhaib who said that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

إِذَا دَخَلَ أَهْلُ الْجَنَّةِ الْجَنَّةَ قَالَ يَقُولُ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى تُرِيدُونَ شَيْئًا أَزِيدُكُمْ؟ فَيَقُولُونَ: أَلَمْ تُبَيِّضْ وُجُوهَنَا!! أَلَمْ تُدْخِلْنَا الْجَنَّةَ وَتُنَجِّنَا مِنْ النَّارِ!! قَالَ فَيَكْشِفُ الْحِجَابَ فَمَا أُعْطُوا شَيْئًا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِمْ مِنْ النَّظَرِ إِلَى رَبِّهِمْ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ ثُمَّ تَلَا هَذِهِ الْآيَةَ: {لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا الْحُسْنَى وَزِيَادَةٌ}

"When the people of Paradise enter Paradise, Allāh, the Blessed and Most High, will say, 'Do you want Me to give you anything more?' They will say, 'Have you not brightened our faces? Have you not made us enter Paradise and saved us from the Fire?' Then He will remove the veil, and of the things given to them nothing would be dearer to them than looking at their Lord, the Mighty and Majestic." He then recited,

﴿لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا الْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ﴾

"For those who have done good is the best and even more [*Ziyādah*]." [Yūnus: 26][1]

Paradise is Allāh's prized commodity which cannot be attained with false hopes. It can only be achieved through the *Tawḥīd* of Allāh, faith and righteous deeds. This is what is established by the Qur'ān and the authentic Sunnah. The pious deeds of the people of Paradise are abundant.

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymīyah (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

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[1] Muslim (no. 181).

"The actions of the people of Paradise are: *Īmān* [faith] and *Taqwá* [piety]. The actions of the people of the Hellfire are: disbelief, sins and transgression.

From the actions of the people of Paradise are:

Belief in Allāh, His angels, His books, His Messengers, the Last Day and the Divine Decree, the good of it and the bad.

The two testimonies: The testimony that none has the right to be worshipped in truth except Allāh, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh. The prayer, giving *Zakāh*, fasting Ramaḍān and Hajj to the House. And to worship Allāh as if you see Him; and if you cannot worship Him as if you see Him, then know that He sees you.

From the actions of the people of Paradise are:

Truthful speech, fulfilling the trust, fulfilling the covenant, being dutiful to the parents, maintaining family ties and benevolence towards the neighbor, orphan, needy and one's possessions, whether humans or animals.

From the actions of the people of Paradise are:

Sincerity to Allāh, reliance upon Him, loving Him and His Messenger, fearing Him, hoping for His mercy, turning to Him in repentance, being patient with His judgement and showing gratitude for His blessings.

From the actions of the people of Paradise are:

Recitation of the Qur'ān, the remembrance of Allāh, supplication to Him, asking Him and desiring what is with Him.

From the actions of the people of Paradise are:

To enjoin the good and forbid the evil, and strive in the path of Allāh against the hypocrites and the disbelievers.

From the actions of the people of Paradise are:

To keep ties with those who cut you off, give to the one who withholds from you and to pardon those who oppress you. Indeed, Allāh has prepared Paradise for the pious who spend in prosperity and adversity, repress their anger and pardon the people. Verily, Allāh loves the good doers.

From the actions of the people of Paradise are:

Justice in all matters when dealing with all of the creation, even the disbelievers. And that which is similar to these actions."[1]

Thus, let everyone who is familiar with Paradise and its bliss race and rush to achieve and successfully attain it. Its gates are open, its lighthouses are visible and its paths are clear.

O Allāh, we ask You for Paradise and everything that brings us closer to it and its path from statements and actions.

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[1] *Majmū' al-Fatāwá* (10/422).

Lesson 26
Hellfire is the Abode of Wicked

Imām Aḥmad related a *ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said that the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

الصِّيَامُ جُنَّةٌ، وَحِصْنٌ حَصِينٌ مِنَ النَّارِ

"Fasting is a shield and impenetrable fortress from the Fire."[1]

'Uthmān b. al-'Āṣ al-Thaqafī said that he heard the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) say:

الصِّيَامُ جُنَّةٌ مِنَ النَّارِ، كَجُنَّةِ أَحَدِكُمْ مِنَ الْقِتَالِ

"Fasting is a shield from the Fire, just like the shield of one of you from fighting."[2]

Jābir (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) narrated that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

قَالَ رَبُّنَا عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: الصِّيَامُ جُنَّةٌ يَسْتَجِنُّ بِهَا الْعَبْدُ مِنَ النَّارِ، وَهُوَ لِي وَأَنَا أَجْزِي بِهِ

[1] *Al-Musnad* (no. 9197).

[2] *Al-Musnad* (no. 15867) and *Sunan Ibn Mājah* (no. 1639).

> "Our Lord, the Mighty and Majestic, said, 'Fasting is a shield, which the servant uses to protect himself from the Fire. It is for Me and I will reward it."[1]

Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) narrated that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

مَنْ صَامَ يَوْمًا فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ بَاعَدَهُ اللَّهُ مِنْ جَهَنَّمَ مَسِيرَةَ سَبْعِينَ خَرِيفًا

> "Whoever fasts a day in the path of Allāh, then Allāh distances him from Hell by a distance of seventy years."[2]

There are numerous *aḥādīth* concerning this, and it has already been mentioned that the gates of the Fire are closed during Ramaḍān.

The Hellfire – may Allāh protect us from it – is an abode of humiliation, disgrace, torment and desertion. Its voice will be a violent exhalation and inhalation. Screaming and wailing are the sounds emanating from its inhabitants. Their moans and sobbing will never end. They are in a state of constant misery, continuous suffering, tears and regret.

They have iron collars and chains around their hands and necks, and they shall be dragged along in the boiling water; then they will be burned in the Fire. It has canopies of Fire ablaze above and below them. Its air is hot wind, and the drink of its inhabitants is boiling water.

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[1] *Al-Musnad* (no. 14669).

[2] *Al-Musnad* (no. 8336).

﴿ يُصْهَرُ بِهِۦ مَا فِي بُطُونِهِمْ وَٱلْجُلُودُ ﴿٢٠﴾ ﴾

"With it will melt or vanish away what is within their bellies, as well as (their) skins." [Al-Hajj: 20]

Their food is a repulsive tree known as *al-Zaqqūm*:

﴿ كَٱلْمُهْلِ يَغْلِي فِي ٱلْبُطُونِ ﴿٤٥﴾ كَغَلْيِ ٱلْحَمِيمِ ﴿٤٦﴾ ﴾

"Like boiling oil, it will boil in the bellies; like the boiling of scalding water." [Al-Dukhān: 45-46]

They supplicate for death and they are not given it, and they ask Allāh to remove them from the Fire and they promise never to return to the disobedience and misguidance they were upon. He [Allāh] will say to them:

﴿ ٱخْسَـُٔواْ فِيهَا وَلَا تُكَلِّمُونِ ﴿١٠٨﴾ ﴾

"Remain you in it with ignominy! And speak you not to Me." [Al-Mu'minūn: 108]

They will request from the angels to intercede with Allāh on their behalf for their punishment to be lightened, even if only for a day, and they will say to them:

﴿ فَٱدْعُواْۗ وَمَا دُعَـٰٓؤُاْ ٱلْكَـٰفِرِينَ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَـٰلٍ ﴾

"Then call (as you like). And the invocation of the disbelievers is nothing but in error." [Ghāfir: 50]

The person who will have the least punishment from amongst the inhabitants of Hell will be a man who will have two flaming coals placed under the arches of his feet, which will cause his brain to boil. Its inhabitants will be of descending levels depending upon the evil of their actions.

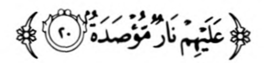
In it will be the disbelievers, polytheists, and hypocrites, and in it will be the sinners, fornicators and disobedient. There is nothing but blame, rebuke and cursing between its inhabitants.

﴿كُلَّمَا دَخَلَتْ أُمَّةٌ لَّعَنَتْ أُخْتَهَا﴾

"Every time a new nation enters, it curses its sister nation (that went before)." [Al-Aʿrāf: 38]

There is no safety nor security for the followers or those they followed. They cannot save themselves from the torment nor can they save their followers. Their leader is Iblīs. He addresses them and then frees himself from them. They have no intercessors nor intimate friends. What a regret for those who are from its inhabitants, and what a loss for those who enter it.

The inhabitants of Hell will be driven to it violently in humiliation and disgrace. They will arrive at it thirsty, and they will be gathered therein deaf, dumb and blind. The Hellfire has seven gates and each gate has a designated number from the people of the Fire that will pass through it. These gates will be locked behind its people, and they will never be able to leave it.



"The Fire will be shut over them." [Al-Balad: 20]

Ibn Abbas said:

"The gates will be locked."

The Fire is extremely hot and its pit is immensely deep. Bukhārī and Muslim related a *ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ) said:

اشْتَكَتْ النَّارُ إِلَى رَبِّهَا فَقَالَتْ رَبِّ أَكَلَ بَعْضِي بَعْضًا؛ فَأَذِنَ لَهَا بِنَفَسَيْنِ: نَفَسٍ فِي الشِّتَاءِ وَنَفَسٍ فِي الصَّيْفِ، فَأَشَدُّ مَا تَجِدُونَ مِنْ الْحَرِّ، وَأَشَدُّ مَا تَجِدُونَ مِنْ الزَّمْهَرِيرِ

> "The Hellfire complained to its Lord saying, 'O Lord, my parts are eating (destroying) one another.' So Allāh allowed it to take two breaths: One in the winter and the other in the summer. The breath in the summer is at the time when you feel the severest heat and the breath in the winter is at the time when you feel the severest cold."[1]

Bukhārī and Muslim related a *ḥadīth* – and the wording is that found in Muslim – narrated by Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَٱللَّهُعَنْهُ) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ) said:

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[1] Bukhārī (no. 3260) and Muslim (no. 617).

نَارُكُمْ هَذِهِ الَّتِي يُوقِدُ ابْنُ آدَمَ جُزْءٌ مِنْ سَبْعِينَ جُزْءًا مِنْ حَرِّ جَهَنَّمَ، قَالُوا: وَاللَّهِ إِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَافِيَةً يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ! قَالَ فَإِنَّهَا فُضِّلَتْ عَلَيْهَا بِتِسْعَةٍ وَسِتِّينَ جُزْءًا كُلُّهَا مِثْلُ حَرِّهَا

"The fire which the son of Adam burns is only one-seventieth of the heat of the Hellfire." The Companions said, "By Allāh, even an ordinary fire would have been enough [to burn people]." He said: "It is sixty-nine parts hotter than the fire [in this world], each part of it is equivalent to its heat."

Whoever enters Paradise will not sense any of the difficulties and suffering that they experienced [in this life], and whoever enters the Hellfire will not sense any of the luxuries and enjoyments that they experienced.

Muslim related in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* a *ḥadīth* narrated by Anas b. Mālik (رضي الله عنه) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

يُؤْتَى بِأَنْعَمِ أَهْلِ الدُّنْيَا مِنْ أَهْلِ النَّارِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَيُصْبَغُ فِي النَّارِ صَبْغَةً ثُمَّ يُقَالُ: يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ هَلْ رَأَيْتَ خَيْرًا قَطُّ؟ هَلْ مَرَّ بِكَ نَعِيمٌ قَطُّ؟ فَيَقُولُ: لَا وَاللَّهِ يَا رَبِّ، وَيُؤْتَى بِأَشَدِّ النَّاسِ بُؤْسًا فِي الدُّنْيَا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ فَيُصْبَغُ صَبْغَةً فِي الْجَنَّةِ فَيُقَالُ لَهُ: يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ هَلْ رَأَيْتَ بُؤْسًا قَطُّ؟ هَلْ مَرَّ بِكَ شِدَّةٌ قَطُّ؟ فَيَقُولُ: لَا وَاللَّهِ يَا رَبِّ مَا مَرَّ بِي بُؤْسٌ قَطُّ وَلَا رَأَيْتُ شِدَّةً قَطُّ

"One of the inhabitants of Hell, who was the most affluent of the people of this world, will be brought and dipped in the Fire on the Day of Resurrection. Then it

will be said to him, 'O, son of Adam, did you ever see any good? Did you ever experience any enjoyment?' He will say, 'By Allāh, no, my Lord.' Then a person from the inhabitants of Paradise, who was the most destitute of the people in this world, will be brought and he will be dipped in Paradise. It will be said to him, 'O son of Adam, did you see any hardship? Did you experience any difficulty?' He will say, 'By Allāh, no, O my Lord. I did not face any hardship or experience any distress.'"[1]

As for the fuel of the Fire, then it is men and stones. He, the Most High, said:

﴿ فَإِن لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا۟ وَلَن تَفْعَلُوا۟ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱلنَّارَ ٱلَّتِى وَقُودُهَا ٱلنَّاسُ وَٱلْحِجَارَةُ ۖ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَـٰفِرِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾ ﴾

"But if you do it not, and you can never do it, then fear the Fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the disbelievers." [Al-Baqarah: 24]

Ibn Jarīr said:

"If someone was to say, "Why have stones been specified along with men as being the fuel for the Fire of Hell?"

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[1] Muslim (no. 2807).

It has been stated that this is referring to brimstone, which – according to what has reached us – is the hottest of stones upon heating…"

He then related with his chain of narration from Ibn Mas'ūd that he said concerning the Saying of Allāh:

﴿وَقُودُهَا ٱلنَّاسُ وَٱلْحِجَارَةُ﴾

"Whose fuel is men and stones." [Al-Baqarah: 24]

"This is referring to stones of Sulphur [brimstone] that Allāh created in the lowest heaven, on the day He created the heavens and the earth, which He has prepared for the disbelievers."[1]

Al-Qurṭubī said about these stones:

"They were selected because they add five different types of torment in comparison to other stones:

1. They rapidly burn.
2. They have a foul stench.
3. They produce great amounts of smoke.
4. They adhere strongly to the bodies.
5. The intensity of their heat when kindled."[2]

A person is unable to independently describe the Fire or its torment, so they must suffice with what Allāh and His Messenger

[1] *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī* (Surah al-Baqarah: 24).

[2] *Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī* (1/235).

have informed us. The torment of Hell is more severe than what comes to mind or anything that can be imagined.

The Fire is the punishment of Allāh with which He punishes those whom He wills from His servants, who deserve this torment. Its inhabitants do not enter it except due to their actions which they committed, and due to their sins and offenses that they perpetrated, and they are many. Shaykh al-Islām mentioned a number of the main reasons [which lead] to Hell, he said:

"The deeds of the people of Hell are:

Associating partners with Allāh, denial of the Messengers and disbelief. Envy, lying, deception, oppression, indecency and treachery. Severing family ties, cowardice in forsaking *Jihād*, stinginess and inconsistency between what is concealed in the heart and what one makes apparent.

Despairing of the Mercy of Allāh, feeling safe from Allāh's plan, annoyance and impatience at times of calamities, boasting and pride at times of opulence. Abandoning the obligations of Allāh, transgressing His boundaries and violating His sanctities. Fearing the creation not the Creator, relying upon the creation, not the Creator and placing hope in the creation, not the Creator.

Doing actions to show off or for fame, opposing the Book and the Sunnah, obeying the creation in the disobedience of the Creator and stubbornly clinging to falsehood. Mocking the Āyāt of Allāh, rejecting the truth and hiding what is compulsory to disclose of knowledge and testimony.

From the actions of the people of the Fire are:

Magic, disrespecting the parents, taking the life of a soul Allāh has forbidden without any due right, consuming the wealth of the orphan, eating usury, fleeing from the battlefield when the enemies meet and slandering innocent, chaste believing women."[1]

O Allāh, we seek refuge with You from the Fire and anything that leads to it from speech and action. O Allāh, liberate our necks from the Fire, in this blessed month, O Lord of the whole of the creation.

[1] *Majmū' al-Fatāwá* (10/423-424).

Lesson 27
Fasting and the Glorification of Allāh

The two Shaykhs [Bukhārī and Muslim] collected in their authentic collections [a *ḥadīth*] narrated by Abū Hurairah (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

قَالَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ :كُلُّ عَمَلِ ابْنِ آدَمَ لَهُ إِلَّا الصِّيَامَ فَإِنَّهُ لِي وَأَنَا أَجْزِي بِهِ ، وَالصِّيَامُ جُنَّةٌ فَإِذَا كَانَ يَوْمُ صَوْمِ أَحَدِكُمْ فَلَا يَرْفُثْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَلَا يَسْخَبْ فَإِنْ سَابَّهُ أَحَدٌ أَوْ قَاتَلَهُ فَلْيَقُلْ إِنِّي امْرُؤٌ صَائِمٌ وَالَّذِي نَفْسُ مُحَمَّدٍ بِيَدِهِ لَخُلُوفُ فَمِ الصَّائِمِ أَطْيَبُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مِنْ رِيحِ الْمِسْكِ وَلِلصَّائِمِ فَرْحَتَانِ يَفْرَحُهُمَا إِذَا أَفْطَرَ فَرِحَ بِفِطْرِهِ وَإِذَا لَقِيَ رَبَّهُ فَرِحَ بِصَوْمِهِ

"Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic, said, 'All of the deeds of the son of Adam are for himself except fasting which is for Me, and I will reward it.' Fasting is a shield. If one of you is fasting he should avoid sexual relations and quarrelling. If anyone insults or fights him, then let him say, 'I am fasting.' By Him in Whose Hand my soul is, the smell coming from the mouth of the fasting person is better before Allāh than the smell of musk. There are two pleasures for the fasting person which he experiences: one at the time of breaking the fast, and the other when he meets his Lord; he will be delighted because of his fast."[1]

In the narration collected by Muslim:

[1] Agreed upon. Bukhari (no. 1904) and Muslim (no. 1150).

كُلُّ عَمَلِ ابْنِ آدَمَ يُضَاعَفُ؛ الْحَسَنَةُ عَشْرُ أَمْثَالِهَا إِلَى سَبْعِمِائَةِ ضِعْفٍ،
قَالَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ إِلَّا الصَّوْمَ فَإِنَّهُ لِي، يَدَعُ شَهْوَتَهُ وَطَعَامَهُ مِنْ أَجْلِي

> "All of the deeds of the son of Adam are multiplied by ten all the way up to seven hundred times. Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic, said, 'Except fasting, verily it is for Me and I will reward it. He forsakes his lusts [desires] and his food for My sake.'"[1]

Allāh, out of his grace and generosity to His servants, multiplies their good deeds many times. A good deed is multiplied by ten all the way up to seven hundred times. This is for the acts of obedience that they perform and carry out from the performance of the obligations, abandonment of the prohibitions, abstention from the detested matters and hastening and competing to do the recommended and supererogatory acts.

As for fasting, then Allāh has attributed it to Himself, conferring distinction upon it and raising it in esteem and station. He did not mention its reward and recompense but sufficed with His Saying:

"It is for Me and I will reward it."

So what do you think Allāh's reward will be and His magnificent bounty for His fasting servants? No one can specify an amount for this reward. However, if they know this Beneficent *Ilāh* [the One Who alone deserves to be worshipped] and Generous Lord, then they would know the

[1] Muslim (no.1150).

greatness of His recompense and reward, which causes the servant to be delighted on two occasions.

Allāh is the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists, the Most Great, the Most High, His alone is the Majesty and Exaltedness, He is All Strong, the All Mighty, and He is the All Rich, Worthy of all praise. He is the Owner of Majesty and Honor, nothing escapes Him, nothing burdens Him nor causes Him fatigue. He is not in need of anyone to elevate Him or increase Him, and none can harm Him or take from His Perfection.

Absolute power belongs to Him alone, and absolute richness and sufficiency is His. The obedience of the dutiful does not benefit Him, and the disobedience of the sinners does not harm Him. What He has given, and what He gives to those who ask and those who do not ask, from the time He created the heavens and the earth until the Day of His meeting, does not diminish His treasures. Everything needs Him, the humans and the Jinn, the animals and the plants, the stones and the mud, the living and the dead and those in the heavens and the earth, and those between them.

﴿ وَلِلَّهِ يَسْجُدُ مَا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ مِن دَآبَّةٍ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾ يَخَافُونَ رَبَّهُم مِّن فَوْقِهِمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ۩ ﴿٥٠﴾ ﴾

> "And to Allāh prostate all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth, of the live moving creatures and the angels, and they are not proud [i.e. they worship their Lord (Allāh) with humility]. They fear their Lord above

them, and they do what they are commanded." [Al-Naḥl: 49-50]

He, the Most High, said:

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَسْجُدُ لَهُۥ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَن فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱلشَّمْسُ وَٱلْقَمَرُ وَٱلنُّجُومُ وَٱلْجِبَالُ وَٱلشَّجَرُ وَٱلدَّوَآبُّ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ ۖ وَكَثِيرٌ حَقَّ عَلَيْهِ ٱلْعَذَابُ ۗ وَمَن يُهِنِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ مِن مُّكْرِمٍ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَآءُ ۩ ﴿١٨﴾﴾

"See you not that to Allāh prostrates whoever is in the heavens and whoever is on the earth, and the sun, and the moon, and the stars, and the mountains, and the trees, and moving living creatures and many of mankind? But there are many (men) on whom the punishment is justified. And whomsoever Allāh disgraces, none can honor him. Verily! Allāh does what He wills." [Al-Hajj: 18]

Allāh is the Possessor of blessings, gifts and amazing presents.

﴿رَبُّنَا ٱلَّذِىٓ أَعْطَىٰ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ خَلْقَهُۥ ثُمَّ هَدَىٰ﴾

"Our Lord is He Who gave to each thing its form and nature, then guided it aright." [Ṭaha: 50]

Allāh blessed His servants by guiding them to this religion, He honored them with the sending of Muhammad (ﷺ) and He gave them nobility through the revelation of the Qur'ān as a guidance for the people and clear proofs of guidance and

criterion. He wrote for them great rewards as a recompense for the obligations they perform and them abandoning the forbidden matters and the prohibitions.

The actions that they perform amount to nothing compared to the blessings of Allāh which He bestows upon His creation, but it is purely His benevolence and generosity to His servants. He is the One Who creates, He is the One Who guides, He is the One Who grants success and He is the One who aids and protects. He is the One Who rewards and honors with the best and most complete recompense.

How great is He, how sublime is He, how generous is He, how merciful is He, and how forbearing is He. He commands with little and He rewards abundantly. The fasting person draws nearer to Allāh with a great act of obedience, which is beloved to Him. That which is secretive, as it relates to the fast, between Him and His servant is more than that which is apparent. The fast involves the manifestation of complete sincerity, fear of Allāh, and consciousness of Him and its beauty.

The fasting person actualizes the beauty of both the heart and the limbs. Thus, all of his limbs surrender to Allāh and adhere to His command, and his heart is full of the love of Allāh and sincerity. Allāh is beautiful and He loves beauty. He loves for His slave to beautify his tongue with the truth, to beautify his heart with sincerity, love, repentance and reliance in Him.

[For them] to beautify their limbs with obedience, and to beautify their bodies by showing His blessings through their clothing and by purifying them of any filth, dirt or impurity;

and by removing the undesirable hairs, circumcision and clipping the nails.

Therefore, they know Allāh through these beautiful attributes, and they seek to draw nearer to Him through beautiful statements, actions and character. They know Him for the beauty which is His attribute, and thus they worship Him with beauty, which is His legislation and religion.[1]

The greater the servant's knowledge and understanding of Allāh within his own self, the greater his devotion to his Lord and desire [to please Him]; his heart will be full of aspiration, hope and fervent desire to attain His pleasure, reward and Paradise, and full of awe and fear of His anger and torment.

The people are of different levels as it pertains to this knowledge and understanding. Ibn al-Qayyim (رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ) said:

> "Some people know Allāh through His generosity, benevolence and blessings. Some through His punishment and retribution. Some through His forbearance, pardon and forgiveness. Some through His power and majesty.
>
> Some through His mercy, kindness and compassion. Some through His supremacy and dominion. Others know Him through Him answering their supplications, assisting them while in anguish and fulfilling their needs.

[1] Refer to *al-Fawā'id*, p. 267-268.

> The ones with the most precise knowledge of Allāh are those who know Him from His Speech. Verily, [this individual] knows Him as the Lord Who possesses perfect attributes and glorious characteristics. There is nothing like Him and He is free of imperfections and deficiencies.
>
> To Him belongs every beautiful name and perfect attribute. He does what He wills. He is above everything, He is with everything [through His knowledge], He is able to do all things and He sustains everything.
>
> He commands and prohibits. He speaks with His words, legislative and universal. He is greater than anything, more beautiful than anything, more merciful than anything, more able than anything and the best of judges.
>
> The Qur'ān was revealed to inform His servants about Him, about His path that leads to Him and about the state of those who traversed this path after they reach Him."[1]

Those who observe the fast should have the most knowledge and reverence of Allāh, so that they can attain the numerous gifts and great reward on the Day of Resurrection.

The more the fasting person has knowledge of Allāh, the closer he gets to Allāh and the greater the reward. This is because he gathers the excellence of fasting, which Allāh rewards him with, and this knowledge, which leads him to perfect his fast, perform his actions well and worship Allāh as if he sees Him.

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[1] *Al-Fawā'id*, p. 258.

Therefore, he is conscious of Allāh in private and seclusion, just like he is conscious of Him in public; so his behavior in private is the same as in public, due to his complete knowledge and his belief that Allāh sees him. This results in him glorifying his Lord and being shy of Him, and it results in piety in all his actions, repentance and submission to Allāh at all times.

O Allāh, accept our fast and make it sincerely for your Face, and bless us to be sincere in all our deeds, and distance us from showing off, hypocrisy and evil character.

Lesson 28
The Obligations in Closing the Month

The days of this noble month were filled with fasting, remembrance of Allāh, and recitation of the Qur'ān. Its nights were illuminated and lit with the prayer and standing. These fine days have passed and these precious nights have ended, as if it was only an hour of the day.

We ask Allāh to bestow upon us what is left of its blessings in the remaining [days], and to close for us this noble month with mercy, forgiveness and liberation from the Fire; and to allow us to witness many years while we are in a state graced with blessings, faith, safety and Islām.

Indeed, Allāh legislated for His servants at the end of this month splendid acts of worship, which increases them in faith, brings them closer to their Lord, completes their worship and perfects the blessing of their Lord upon them. The most important of these acts of worship are:

Zakāh al-Fiṭr, the *Takbīr* [saying *Allāhu Akbar* (Allāh is the greatest)] after the completion of the fast and the *'Īd* prayer.

- As for *Zakāh al-Fiṭr*, then the Prophet (ﷺ) made it compulsory to give one *Ṣā'*[1] of food. Bukhārī and Muslim related from Ibn 'Umar that he said:

[1] **[TN]** This is approximately three Kilograms. If this amount is given, then the individual has surely given a complete *Ṣā'*.

فَرَضَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ زَكَاةَ الْفِطْرِ صَاعًا مِنْ تَمْرٍ أَوْ صَاعًا مِنْ شَعِيرٍ عَلَى الْعَبْدِ وَالْحُرِّ وَالذَّكَرِ وَالْأُنْثَى وَالصَّغِيرِ وَالْكَبِيرِ مِنْ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، وَأَمَرَ بِهَا أَنْ تُؤَدَّى قَبْلَ خُرُوجِ النَّاسِ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ

> "The Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) made it compulsory to give one *Sāʿ* of dates or one *Sāʿ* of barley as *Zakāh al-Fiṭr* on every Muslim, young and old, male and female, free and slave; and he commanded that it be given before the people leave for the prayer."[1]

Additionally, Bukhārī and Muslim related from Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī who said:

كُنَّا نُخْرِجُ فِي عَهْدِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَوْمَ الْفِطْرِ صَاعًا مِنْ طَعَامٍ، وَكَانَ طَعَامَنَا الشَّعِيرُ وَالزَّبِيبُ وَالْأَقِطُ وَالتَّمْرُ

> "In the lifetime of the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), we used to give on the Day of *Fiṭr* one *Sāʿ* of food as *Zakāh al-Fiṭr*. Our food used to be barley, raisins, cottage cheese or dates."[2]

Ibn Abbas said:

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[1] Bukhārī (no. 1503) and Muslim (no. 2325).

[2] Bukhārī (no. 1510) and Muslim (no. 2331).

فَرَضَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ زَكَاةَ الْفِطْرِ طُهْرَةً لِلصَّائِمِ مِنَ اللَّغْوِ وَالرَّفَثِ وَطُعْمَةً لِلْمَسَاكِينِ، فَمَنْ أَدَّاهَا قَبْلَ الصَّلَاةِ فَهِيَ زَكَاةٌ مَقْبُولَةٌ، وَمَنْ أَدَّاهَا بَعْدَ الصَّلَاةِ فَهِيَ صَدَقَةٌ مِنَ الصَّدَقَاتِ

> "The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) made *Zakāh al-Fiṭr* obligatory as a purification for the fasting person from any indecent act or speech, and to provide food for the needy. It is accepted as *Zakāh* for the person who pays it before the *'Īd* prayer, and it is charity for the one who pays it after the prayer."[1]

It is obligatory for the Muslim to pay *Zakāh al-Fiṭr* for himself and anyone whom he must provide for such as his wife, children and anyone he financially supports. It is not mandatory to give *Zakāh* on behalf of the unborn child in the womb, but he gives it as a highly-recommended action.

He gives it in the land in which he observed the month of Ramaḍān, and if those for whom he must pay *Zakāh al-Fiṭr* reside in a different land, then he gives it in the land he is in. However, it is permissible for the individual to entrust them with the duty of giving *Zakāh*, on behalf of him and their own selves.

The time to give *Zakāh al-Fiṭr* starts from sunset on the night of *'Īd* and continues until the *'Īd* prayer. It is allowed to give it prior to *'Īd* by a day or two, meaning on the twenty eighth and twenty ninth day. To give it earlier than this is not permissible. It is best to delay it until the morning of *'Īd* before the prayer.

[1] Abū Dāwūd (no. 1609) and Ibn Mājah (no. 1827).

If a person delays giving *Zakāh al-Fiṭr* until after the *ʿĪd* prayer without a legitimate excuse he is sinful, but it is still incumbent upon him to give it even if it is after the day of *ʿĪd*. This is viewed as making up a missed obligation.

The one who deserves *Zakāh al-Fiṭr* is the one who deserves the *Zakāh* of wealth, so it is paid to them directly or to their representative at its set time.

The amount of *Zakāh al-Fiṭr* due from one person is a *Ṣāʿ* of barley, wheat, dates, raisins or cottage cheese. He gives from these types of food what is commonly eaten in that particular land. Additionally, he can give other foodstuffs from what is normally eaten in that land like rice, corn, pearl millet and other than this.

It is neither correct nor acceptable to pay its equivalent value in cash instead of [what has been specified for] *Zakāh al-Fiṭr*. This opposes the command of the Prophet (ﷺ) and it is in opposition to the practice of the Companions, as they never paid their *Zakāh al-Fiṭr* in currency, not during the lifetime of the Prophet (ﷺ) nor after him during the era of the Companions, even though currency existed at their time.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

مَنْ عَمِلَ عَمَلًا لَيْسَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْرُنَا فَهُوَ رَدٌّ

> "Whoever does an action which is not in accordance to this affair of ours will have it is rejected."[1]

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[1] Muslim (no. 1718).

- As for the *Takbīr*, then it is legislated to say it from sunset on the night of *ʿĪd* up until the *ʿĪd* prayer. Allāh, the Most High, said:

﴿وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَىٰكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ﴾

> "And that you must magnify Allāh [say the *Takbīr*] for having guided you so that you may be grateful to Him." [Al-Baqarah: 185]

It is recommended for the men to say the *Takbīr* aloud in the *Masājid*, markets and homes, proclaiming the glorification of Allāh and openly manifesting his worship and thanks.

It is authentically narrated:

أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَانَ يَخْرُجُ يَوْمَ الْفِطْرِ فَيُكَبِّرُ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ الْمُصَلَّى وَحَتَّى يَقْضِيَ الصَّلَاةَ، فَإِذَا قَضَى الصَّلَاةَ قَطَعَ التَّكْبِيرَ

> "That the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) would leave out on the Day of *Fiṭr* and he would say the *Takbīr* until he reached the *Musallá* [the area of prayer] and until he finished the prayer. Once he finished the prayer he stopped saying the *Takbīr*."[1]

As for its wording, then it has been transmitted from some of the Companions that they would say:

[1] *Muṣannaf Ibn Abu Shaybah* (no. 5667: [2/71]).

اللّٰهُ أَكْبَرُ اللّٰهُ أَكْبَرُ لا إِلَهَ إِلا اللّٰهُ وَاللّٰهُ أَكْبَرُ، اللّٰهُ أَكْبَرُ وَلِلّٰهِ الْحَمْدُ

"*Allāhu Akbar, Allāhu Akbar, Lā Ilāha Illa Allāh, Wa Allāhu Akbar, Allāhu Akbar, Wa Lillāh al-Ḥamd.*"[1]

"Allāh is the greatest, Allāh is the greatest, and none has the right to be worshipped in truth except Allāh; and Allāh is the greatest, Allāh is the greatest, and all praise belongs to Allāh."

Every Muslim says this independently. As for saying the *Takbīr* as a group with one voice where it starts and finishes at the same time, then this is not the Sunnah. None of the *Salaf* did this, and all good is in following them.

The Sunnah for the women is for them to say the *Takbīr* quietly because they are commanded with lowering their voice and modesty.

How beautiful is it when the people fill the horizon with their *Takbīr*, glorifying Allāh and magnifying Him. Announcing the end of the month, thanking Allāh for allowing them to complete the month of fasting, following their Messenger and worshipping Allāh through these magnificent statements of remembrance, which affirms for Allāh greatness, majesty, glory and praise with love, hope, fear and aspiration.

- As for the rulings pertaining to the *'Īd*:

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[1] Muslim (no. 890).

It is recommended to perform a Ghusl for the *'Īd*, and for the Muslim to wear his best garments. It is not allowed for him to adorn himself, not on the *'Īd* nor on other than it, with garments of silk, garments that fall below the ankles, garments that expose and define the *'Awrah*, or garments that are specific to the disbelievers.

It is not allowed to adorn oneself, not on the 'Īd nor on other than it, by shaving the beard, as this is forbidden and it is not beautification in any way. It is also considered to be imitation of the disbelievers and the women. True beauty and real tidiness is in following the Sunnah and clinging to the guidance of the Imām of this nation (صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ).

It is legislated for the woman to go to the *Musallá* without improperly exposing herself or wearing perfume. It is obligatory for her to treat herself with more esteem than [to allow herself] to go to the obedience of Allāh whilst being wrapped in the disobedience of indecent dress, exposure of the *'Awrah* and wearing perfume in the presence of strange men.

From his guidance (صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ) was to command the women to go out to the *'Īd* prayer. Umm 'Atiyyah said:

> "The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّىٱللَّهُعَلَيْهِوَسَلَّمَ) commanded us to bring out on *'Īd al-Fiṭr* and *'Īd al-Aḍḥá* the virgin women, menstruating women and the mature women. The menstruating women were to keep away from the prayer, but participate in the good and the supplications of the Muslims. I said, 'O Messenger of Allāh, one of us

may not have an outer garment (*Jilbāb*). He said, 'Let her sister cover her with her outer garment.'"[1]

It is recommended for the Muslim to eat dates on *'Īd al-Fiṭr* prior to leaving in the morning to the Musallá [prayer area], based on the action of the Prophet (ﷺ).

It is also recommended for the individual to take different paths, so if he goes by one route he returns by another.

There is no prayer directly before or after the *'Īd* prayer.

O Allāh, close this month for us [by allowing us] to perform actions and statements which will make You pleased with us, and make our final deeds the best of our actions and the day we meet You the best of our days.

[1] Muslim (no. 890).

Lesson 29
What Is After Ramaḍān?

There is absolutely no doubt that every fasting person who fasted the month of Ramaḍān and every person who stood in prayer during its nights earnestly hopes that his fast and prayer will be righteous and accepted, and that his endeavor is rewarded. He calls upon Allāh with invocations to grant him this desire and to confer upon him this wish.

There are signs that allude to the acceptance [of an action], indications that point towards this and characteristics which in their presence it is hoped that this goal has been reached.

From these signs is that the individual finds himself upon more good, uprightness and obedience after Ramaḍān than prior to it. He performs his worship with fervor and dedication. He guards the compulsory matters and obligations, and he performs the prayer in the Masjid along with the congregation. He loves good, acts upon it and commands with it; and he hates evil, abandons it and warns against it.

As for the one whose condition is the same after Ramaḍān or worse than it – he is reckless in his transgression and misguidance, lazy in fulfilling the obligations and neglects them, and engrossed in forbidden acts and encourages with them – then these are signs of clear loss and a lack of prosperity.

He did not seize the opportunities in the season of obedience, he did not pursue its gifts in the season of bounties and he did not ask Allāh for forgiveness nor exhaust its means in the month of

forgiveness and pleasure. What a great loss! What a serious calamity! What a terrifying outcome and punishment!

The blessed month of Ramaḍān is a great season to accustom oneself to righteousness, being diligent in the worship of Allāh and competing to perform good deeds. It is abhorrent for the Muslim to forsake worship once this month has finished, as is the state of some people who do not know Allāh nor the worship of Him except in Ramaḍān.

It is said to these people:

O you who knew in Ramaḍān that you had a Lord, whom you worshipped, obeyed, feared and placed your hope, how could you forget Him after Ramaḍān?

O you who knew that Allāh made it obligatory upon you to pray five prayers in the Masjid, how can you be ignorant of this or feign ignorance after Ramaḍān?

O you who knew in Ramaḍān that Allāh forbade you from all acts of disobedience, how can you forget this after Ramaḍān?

O you who knew in Ramaḍān that in front of you there is Paradise, the Hellfire, a reward and a punishment, how can you be heedless of this after Ramaḍān?

O you who used to fill the Masājid in Ramaḍān and recite the Qur'ān, how have you forsaken the Masājid and abandoned the Qur'ān after Ramaḍān?

How strange is it that a people do not know Allāh except in Ramaḍān, and do not fear Allāh except in Ramaḍān.

Some of the *Salaf* were asked about the condition of a people who were like this, and they responded:

> "How evil is a people who do not know Allāh except in Ramaḍān."

Verily, the Lord of the months is One; the Lord of Ramaḍān is the Lord of Shawwāl, Sha'bān and the rest of the months. It is obligatory upon the Muslim to worship Allāh and desist from disobeying Him at all times and moments, as He (سُبْحَانَهُۥ وَتَعَالَىٰ) said:

﴿ وَٱعْبُدْ رَبَّكَ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَكَ ٱلْيَقِينُ ﴾ (٩٩)

> "And worship your Lord until there comes unto you the certainty (i.e. death)." [Al-Ḥijr: 99]

This means: To remain consistent in your worship of Allāh and turning to Him in repentance, throughout your whole life until death overtakes you and your lifetime in this world ends. This is because a person's life belongs to Allāh, and Allāh wants the servant to fill it with His obedience and worship, nothing else. He, the Most High, said:

﴿ قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴾ (١٦٢)

> "Say, 'Verily, my prayer, my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allāh, the Lord of the creation." [Al-An'ām: 162]

Whoever occupies his time, lifespan, health, spare time, strength, youth, intellect, thoughts, heart, tongue and all of his other limbs with something Allāh did not command or His Messenger did not legislate from the obligations, recommended deeds or permissible affairs with which he intends to draw closer to Allāh, then he has surely wronged his soul and oppressed it greatly.

This will turn into regret and sorrow on the Day of Resurrection, which will be according to the extent of his negligence and disregard.

Whoever preserves something and clings to it, will die upon it and be resurrected upon it. This is the way of Allāh with the creation. For this reason, He ordered His servants and *Awliyā* to remain firm upon Islām and to persist upon its laws and religious rites until they die. He, the Most High, said:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِۦ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُم مُّسْلِمُونَ ١٠٢﴾

> "O you who believe, fear Allāh as He should be feared, and die not except in a state of Islam (as Muslims) with complete submission to Allāh ." [Āl 'Imrān: 102]

Ibn Kathīr said:

> "Meaning: Preserve your Islām while you are in a state of health and wellbeing, so that you die upon it. The Most Generous has decreed that the one who lives upon something, dies upon it and is resurrected upon it. We seek refuge from dying on other than Islām."[1]

[1] *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr* [2/87].

Imām Aḥmad, al-Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah and others related from Mujāhid that he said:

أَنَّ النَّاسَ كَانُوا يَطُوفُونَ بِالْبَيْتِ وَابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ جَالِسٌ مَعَهُ مِحْجَنٌ فَقَالَ : قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ (({ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ } وَلَوْ أَنَّ قَطْرَةً مِنْ الزَّقُّومِ قُطِرَتْ لَأَمَرَّتْ عَلَى أَهْلِ الْأَرْضِ عَيْشَهُمْ فَكَيْفَ مَنْ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ طَعَامٌ إِلَّا الزَّقُّومُ

"The people were circling around [*Ṭawāf*] the Sacred House when Ibn 'Abbās was sitting, holding a staff with a crooked end. Ibn 'Abbās said, 'The Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِۦ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُم مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾﴾

'O you who believe, fear Allāh as He should be feared, and die not except in a state of Islam (as Muslims) with complete submission to Allāh.' [Āl 'Imrān: 102]

Verily, if a drop of *Zaqqūm* (a tree in Hell) falls, it will spoil life for the people of earth. What about those whose food is only from *Zaqqūm*?"[1]

From the comprehensive supplications is the saying of Yūsuf:

﴿أَنتَ وَلِىِّۦ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ ۖ تَوَفَّنِى مُسْلِمًا وَأَلْحِقْنِى بِٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ﴾

[1] *Al-Musnad* (no. 2735), al-Tirmidhī (no. 2585) and Ibn Mājah (no. 4325). The wording is that related by Imām Aḥmad.

"You are my Protector in this world and in the Hereafter, cause me to die as a Muslim, and join me with the righteous." [Yūsuf: 101]

There is no goodness in this life nor happiness, safety or security except by clinging to this religion and adhering to all its teachings, laws and directives. Rather, the wellbeing of this world is connected to the wellbeing of the religion. That is why the Prophet (ﷺ) used to mention them together, saying:

اللَّهُمَّ أَصْلِحْ لِي دِينِي الَّذِي هُوَ عِصْمَةُ أَمْرِي ، وَأَصْلِحْ لِي دُنْيَايَ الَّتِي فِيهَا مَعَاشِي، وَأَصْلِحْ لِي آخِرَتِي الَّتِي فِيهَا مَعَادِي ، وَاجْعَلْ الْحَيَاةَ زِيَادَةً لِي فِي كُلِّ خَيْرٍ ، وَاجْعَلْ الْمَوْتَ رَاحَةً لِي مِنْ كُلِّ شَرٍّ

"O Allāh, set right for me my religion, which is the safeguard of my affairs. Set right for me the affairs of my world in which is my living. Set right for me my Hereafter, which is my eternal abode. Make this life a means of increase in all that is good for me, and make my death a relief from all that is evil for me."[1]

He (ﷺ) would commence the month with the well-known supplication, when seeing the crescent moon:

اللَّهُمَّ أَهْلِلْهُ عَلَيْنَا بِالْيُمْنِ وَالإِيمَانِ وَالسَّلاَمَةِ وَالإِسْلاَمِ، رَبِّي وَرَبُّكَ اللَّهُ

"O Allāh, bring it over us with blessing, faith, security and Islām. My Lord and your Lord is Allāh."[2]

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[1] Related by Muslim (no. 2720).

[2] Related by al-Tirmidhī (no. 3451).

He (ﷺ) was pointing out the relationship and connection between security, faith, wellbeing and Islām.

It is as if he is saying that if a person wants to live safe and secure during this month and the rest of his life, then let him cling to Islām and live upon faith.

For verily, whoever believes in Allāh and adheres to his legislation, which He revealed to His Prophet (ﷺ), and he does not spoil this with anything from *Shirk*, disbelief, innovations or disobedience, then Allāh guarantees for him safety, wellbeing and guidance in this life and the Hereafter.
He, the Most High, said:

﴿ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوٓا۟ إِيمَـٰنَهُم بِظُلْمٍ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ لَهُمُ ٱلْأَمْنُ وَهُم مُّهْتَدُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾﴾

> "It is those who believe (in the Oneness of Allāh and worship none but Him Alone) and confuse not their belief with oppression, for them (only) there is security and they are the guided." [Al-An'ām: 82]

He (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ) said:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوا۟ رَبُّنَا ٱللَّهُ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَقَـٰمُوا۟ تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا۟ وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا۟ وَأَبْشِرُوا۟ بِٱلْجَنَّةِ ٱلَّتِى كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ نَحْنُ أَوْلِيَآؤُكُمْ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَفِى ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ ۖ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِىٓ أَنفُسُكُمْ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَدَّعُونَ ﴿٣١﴾ نُزُلًا مِّنْ غَفُورٍ رَّحِيمٍ ﴿٣٢﴾ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِّمَّن دَعَآ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَـٰلِحًا وَقَالَ إِنَّنِى مِنَ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾﴾

> "Verily, those who say, 'Our Lord is Allāh (Alone).' And then they are upright and firm, on them the angels will descend (at the time of their death) (saying), 'Fear not, nor grieve, but receive the glad tidings of Paradise which you have been promised. We have been your friends in the life of this world and are (so) in the Hereafter. Therein you shall have (all) that your inner-selves desire, and therein you shall have (all) for which you ask for. An entertainment from (Allāh), the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.' And who is better in speech than he who says, 'My Lord is Allāh (believes in His Oneness),' and then stands straight (acts upon His Order), and] invites (men) to Allāh's (Islamic Monotheism), and does righteous deeds, and says, 'I am one of the Muslims.'" [Al-Fuṣṣilat: 30-33]

He (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ) said:

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿١٣﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ ﴾

> "Verily, those who say, 'Our Lord is (only) Allāh,' and thereafter upright and firm, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve. Such shall be the dwellers of Paradise, abiding therein (forever), a reward for what they used to do." [Al-Ahqāf: 13-14]

Muslim related upon the authority of 'Abdullah b. 'Amr (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) who said that the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

فَمَنْ أَحَبَّ أَنْ يُزَحْزَحَ عَنْ النَّارِ وَيُدْخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَلْتَأْتِهِ مَنِيَّتُهُ وَهُوَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَلْيَأْتِ إِلَى النَّاسِ الَّذِي يُحِبُّ أَنْ يُؤْتَى إِلَيْهِ

"Whoever loves to be delivered from the Fire and enter Paradise, let him die believing in Allāh and the Last Day, and let him treat people as he would like to be treated."[1]

[1] Muslim (no. 1844).

Lesson 30
Points of Reflection on the Day of ʿĪd

The blessed day of *ʿĪd al-Fiṭr* is the day with which Allāh crowns the month of fasting, with it He opens the months of Hajj to His sacred House and on it He generously bestows reward, recompense and honor upon those who observed the fast and stood in prayer.

Verily, it is a day of *ʿĪd* that fills the hearts of the Muslims with joy and happiness, and it causes their breasts to expand with pleasure and delight. On this day, the people go out, praising their Lord, glorifying Him and proclaiming His greatness, due to Him blessing them to complete the fast and stand in prayer, thankful and gratified. They hope and long for His good, reward and recompense.

They ask their Generous Lord to accept their deeds, forgive them for their offenses and to allow them to witness many more years and long periods upon good and the obedience of Allāh, the Most Generous. There are a number of points that it is appropriate for us to reflect and contemplate upon:

- We should remember while we experience the joys of *ʿĪd* our brothers who were taken away and were overtaken by death. Therefore, they did not witness the gathering of *ʿĪd*. Instead, they are in their graves as detainees, they have pawned their actions and they are receiving their recompense based on the actions they put forth in this world.

Be certain that you are going where they have gone, they went first and you shall follow. Do not forget them in your righteous supplications, asking Allāh to pardon their slips, forgive their mistakes, raise their ranks and to make their graves a garden from the gardens of Paradise.

O Allāh, forgive our dead and the dead of the Muslims, have mercy upon them, grant them a noble abode and a spacious and honorable entrance.

- Remember while experiencing the joys of *'Īd* in health and wellbeing your brothers who have been detained by illness and it prevented them from attending the gathering of *'Īd*. They are in the hospitals laying in their beds and they are resting with their families.

  Some have been in this state for many months and some for many weeks. Some of them cannot shut their eyelids nor can they rest due to the severe pains and distressing aches. They would love to participate with their brothers in their joyful moments.

  Therefore, thank Allāh for your health, wellbeing and safety, and do not forget them with your righteous supplications, asking Allāh to cure their sickness, relieve their pain, free them from their distress and remove from them their grief. O Allāh, cure our sick and the sick Muslims. O Allāh, Lord of the people, remove their trouble and cure them with a healing that will leave behind no ailment, for You are the Healer. None brings about healing but You.

From the best actions on the day of *'Īd* and most beneficial of them is to visit the sick at their place of residence, to console them and supplicate for them.

Imām Aḥmad and Abū Dāwūd related from 'Alī (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُ) that he said:

> "I heard the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) say, 'When a man visits his sick Muslim brother, he is walking among the harvests of Paradise until he sits down. When he sits down he is covered with mercy. If it is morning, seventy thousand angels will ask Allāh to send blessings upon him until evening. If it is evening, seventy thousand angels will ask Allāh to send blessings upon him until morning.'"[1]

- Remember while you enjoy the pleasures of this happy *'Īd* in safety, security, comfort and solace your brothers who have been destroyed by wars, placed in turmoil through calamities, perturbed by tribulations and overcome by their enemies. Their blood has been shed, the women have become widows, the children have become orphans and the wealth has been usurped.

  Praise Allāh for the safety and security that you enjoy, and do not forget your brothers in your righteous supplications, asking Allāh to alleviate their suffering, free them from their distress and to crush their enemies and grant them victory over them.

[1] *Musnad* (no. 612, 22273), Abū Dāwūd (no. 3098) and Ibn Mājah (no. 1442). The wording is that related by Imām Aḥmad.

O Allāh, give might to Islām and the Muslims and humiliate polytheism and the polytheists. O Allāh, make this land, and the rest of the Muslim lands, peaceful and secure.

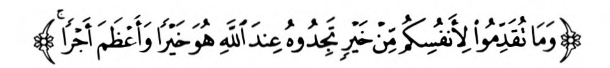
- Remember while you enjoy the pleasures of this happy *ʿĪd* with your fine garments and beautiful clothes your brothers who are destitute due to poverty and have great needs. Some of them do not find clothing to wear, a home to live in, food to nourish them or drink to quench their thirst. Rather, some of them die from destructive famine and alarming drought.

Praise Allāh for the blessings you enjoy and do not forget your brothers in your righteous supplications, asking Allāh to enrich the poor, satisfy the hungry, fulfil their needs, alleviate them of their poverty and to settle their debts.

O Allāh, you are the First and nothing is before You, You are the Last and nothing is after You, You are the Most High and there is nothing above You, and You are the Most Near [with Your knowledge] and there is nothing nearer than You. Settle their debts for them and spare them from poverty.

O Allāh, suffice them with that which you have made lawful, so they abstain from what you have forbidden. O Allāh, enrich them through your blessings, so that they have no need for other than You.

Do not forget to extend a helping hand to your brother, assisting them with financial support, clothes, food, blankets and anything similar.



"And whatever good you put forward for yourselves, you will find it with Allāh. It is better and greater in reward." [Al-Muzammil: 20]

﴿وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ﴾

"Whatever you do of good deeds, truly, Allāh knows it well." [Al-Baqarah: 215]

- Remember while you enjoy the pleasures of this happy *'Īd* after completing the acts of obedience in Ramadan and having successfully stood in prayer and fasted your brothers who have been fettered by their sins and bound by their offenses.

  The enthusiastic believers spent their time in the obedience of Allāh and the sincere righteous people competed in drawing nearer to Allāh. However, these individuals [i.e. the sinners] were engrossed in their amusement and sin. They were apathetic about obedience and pious deeds, and engaged in sins, acts of disobedience and offenses.

  This season of worship and competition to do good deeds passes them by and they do not move. Praise Allāh for blessing you with acts of obedience and for guiding you to perform deeds which bring you closer to what pleases Him. Ask Him for firmness in this matter and resoluteness upon right guidance.

  Do not forget these brothers of yours in your righteous supplications, asking Allāh to guide them to good and to

return them to the truth in the most beautiful way. O Allāh, guide those of the Muslims who are misguided and direct to the truth those who are confused, and return them to the truth in the most beautiful fashion. O Allāh, cure those who have been afflicted, and accept the repentance of the sinners and the disobedient.

- Remember while you enjoy the pleasures of this happy *ʿĪd* that Allāh has honored you in the blessed month of Ramaḍān by chaining the devils – meaning that they are locked up and shackled – so they were not at liberty to do what they were accustomed to before Ramaḍān.

It is as if before my eyes, as soon as the month of Ramaḍān has come to a close, they have been released from their chains and they have left their shackles with determination and malice, so that they can make up for what they missed from misguiding and misleading the people in the month of Ramaḍān.

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَٱتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًّا ۚ إِنَّمَا يَدْعُوا۟ حِزْبَهُۥ لِيَكُونُوا۟ مِنْ أَصْحَٰبِ ٱلسَّعِيرِ ٦ ﴾

"Surely, the devil is an enemy to you, so take (treat) him as an enemy. He only invites his party that they may become the dwellers of the blazing Fire." [Al-Fāṭir: 6]

It is impossible for anyone to protect themselves from the devil except with the remembrance of Allāh, remaining upon his obedience, forsaking his disobedience and seeking refuge with Allāh from the accursed devil.

﴿وَقُل رَّبِّ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ هَمَزَٰتِ ٱلشَّيَـٰطِينِ ﴿٩٧﴾ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ رَبِّ أَن يَحْضُرُونِ ﴿٩٨﴾﴾

"And say: 'My Lord! I seek refuge with You from the whisperings (suggestions) of the devils. And I seek refuge with You, My Lord! lest they may attend (or come near) me.'" [Al-Mu'minūn: 97-98]

- Remember when you gather on the day of *'Īd* the major gathering when you will all stand on the Day of Resurrection before the Lord of the whole of the creation, barefooted without shoes, naked without clothes covering your bodies and staring in horror.

The Day the scrolls will be spread out and the balances will be set up.

﴿يَوْمَ يَفِرُّ ٱلْمَرْءُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ ﴿٣٤﴾ وَأُمِّهِۦ وَأَبِيهِ ﴿٣٥﴾ وَصَـٰحِبَتِهِۦ وَبَنِيهِ ﴿٣٦﴾ لِكُلِّ ٱمْرِئٍ مِّنْهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ شَأْنٌ يُغْنِيهِ ﴿٣٧﴾﴾

"That Day shall a man flee from his brother, from his mother and his father, and from his wife and his children. Everyman that Day will have enough to make him careless of others." ['Abasa: 34-37]

Make preparations for that day and take provisions, as long as you are living in the realms of action, and the best provision is piety.

O Allāh, grant our souls piety and purify them, for You are the best One to purify them, You are their Guardian and Protector. O Allāh, grant us success to perform righteous actions and statements, and bless us with a good ending.

Glossary

A

Āyah: (pl. *āyāt*) "sign," a verse of the *Qur'ān*.
Āhād: a narration which has not reached the level of *mutawātir*.
Ahādīth: see *hadīth*.
'Alayhis-salām: "may Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) protect and preserve him." It is said after the name of a Prophet of Allāh or after the name of an Angel.
Anṣār: "helpers;" the Muslims of al-Madīnah who supported the Muslims who migrated from Makkah.
'Arsh: Throne of Allāh (جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ).
'Aṣr: the afternoon Prayer.
Awliyā': see *Walī*.

B

Bid'ah: Heresy (any innovatory practice).
Burāq: An animal bigger than a donkey and smaller than a horse on which the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) went for the *Mi'rāj*.

D

Dā'ī: one engaged in *da'wah*, caller.
Da'aef: "weak," unauthentic narration.
Da'wah: invitation, call to Allāh (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ).

Dīn: a completed way of life prescribed by Allāh (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَىٰ).
Dhikr: (pl. *adhkār*) remembrance of Allāh (جَلَّ وَعَلَا) with the heart, sayings of the tongue and actions of our limbs.

E

Īmān: faith, to affirm all that was revealed to the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

F

Fāhish: one who uses foul language.
Fard Kifāyah: collective obligation - if fulfilled by a part of the community then the rest are not obligated.
Fatwā: (pl. *fatāwā*) religious verdicts.
Faqīh: A scholar who can give religious verdicts.
Fiqh: Islāmic jurisprudence, understanding.
Fitnah: (pl. *fitan*) Trials, persecution, conflicts and strifes.
Fitrah: the natural disposition that one is born upon.

G

Ghulū: going to an extreme.
Ghusl: A ceremonial bath necessary for the one who is in a state of *Janābah*.

H

Hadīth: (pl. *ahādīh*) the saying, actions and approvals narrated from the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ).
Halāl: lawful.
Hanīf: pure Islāmic Monotheism (worshipping Allāh alone and nothing else).
Harām: unlawful and forbidden.
Hasan: fine, good; a term used for an authentic *hadīth*, which does not reach the level of *Sahīh*.
Harj: killing.
Al-Harūriyyah: an especially un-orthodox religious sect that branched off from the *Khawārij*.
Hijrahh: migration from the land of *Shirk* to the land of Islām.
Hukm: a judgment of legal decision (especially of Allāh).

I

'Ibādah: worship, worship of Allāh.
Ihsān: worshipping Allāh as though you see Him. However, since you cannot see Him, then know that He sees you.
Ijmā': consensus, a unified opinion of Scholars regarding a certain issue.
Ijtihād: exertion of effort; the process of arriving at a reasoned decision by a Scholar on an issue.
Imām: leaders; leaders in Prayer, knowledge in *fiqh*, leader of a state.
Isnād: the chain of narrators linking the collector of the saying to the person quoted.
Istikhārah: a Prayer consisting of two units (*rak'ah*) asking Allāh for guidance.
Istiwā: ascending; the ascending of Allāh above the Throne (in the manner that befits His Majesty).

J

Janābah: state of a person after having sexual intercourse or sexual discharge.
Janāzah: (pl. *janā'iz*): Funeral.
Jihād: striving, struggling, fighting to make the Word of Allāh supreme.
Jum'ah: Friday.
Jinn: invisible creation, created by Allāh from smokeless fire.
Junub: a person who is in the state of *janābah*.

K

Ka'bah: a square stone building in *al-Masjidul-Haram* (the great mosque in Makkah which Muslims go to for pilgrimage and which all Muslims direct their face in Prayer).
Al-Kabā'ir: the major sins.
Khārijī: (pl. *Khawārij*): those who declared that a Muslim becomes a disbeliever due to committing a major sin alone.
Khalīfah: (pl. *khulafā'*): the head of the Islāmic government to whom the oath of allegiance is given.
Khilāfah: an Islāmic state.
Khutbah: (person *khatīb)*, religious talk (sermon).
Kufr: (person *kāfir*) act of disbelief in the Religion of Islām.

M

Madhhab: position or opinion of a Scholar; school of Islāmic Jurisprudence.

Makrūh: not approved of, undesirable from the point of view of Religion, although not punʿIshāble.
Manhaj: way; method; methodology.
Marfū': raised; a narration attributed to the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).
Masjid: mosque.
Mawbiqāt: great destructive sins.
Mudallis: one who practises *tadlīs*.
Muhājir: (pl. *muhājirūn*, *muhājirīn*) one who migrated from the land of the disbelievers to the land of the Muslims for the sake of Allāh.
Muhaddith: scholar of the science of *hadīth*.
Muftī: one who gives *fatāwā*.
Mujāhid: (pl. *mujāhidūn*): a Muslim warrior in *Jihād*.
Mujtahid: one who is quʿAlīfied to pass judgment using *ijtihād*.
Munkar: "rejected;" a narration which is un-authentic itself and contradicts and authentic narrations.
Muqallid: one who practices *taqlīd*.
Mushrik: (pl. *mushrikūn*) polytheists, pagans and disbelievers in the oneness of Allāh (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) and His Messenger (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ).
Mustahabb: recommended; an action if left it is not punʿIshāble and if done it is rewardable.
Muttaqūn: those who are pious.
Mutawātir: a *hadīth* which is narrated by a very large number of narrators, such that it cannot be supported that they all agreed upon a lie.
Muwahhid: (pl. *muwahhidūn*) one who unifies all of his worship and directs it to Allāh alone.
Mawdū': fabricated; spurious; invented (narration).
Mawqūf: stopped; a narration from a Companion (not going back to the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)).
Mawsūl: "connected;" a continuous *isnād* (can be narrated back to the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)).

N

Nāfilah: (pl. *nawāfil*) Optional practice of worship.
Niyyah: intention from the heart.
Nusuk: a sacrifice.

Q

Qadar: Divine pre-ordainment; that which Allāh has ordained for his creation.
Qiblah: the direction the Muslims face during Prayer.
Qiyās: analogical deduction of Islāmic laws. New laws are deduced from old laws based upon similarity between their causes.
Qunūt: "devotion;" a special supplication while standing in the Prayer.
Quraysh: one of the greatest tribes in Arabia in the pre-Islāmic period of Ignorance. The Prophet (ﷺ) belonged to this tribe.

R

Rāfidī: the correct title for the extreme *Shī'ah.* Those who bear m'Alīce and grudges against the noble Companions (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ) to the extent that they declare them to be apostates. They also hold that the *Qur'ān* which the Muslims have is neither complete nor preserved from corruption.
Ramadān: the ninth month of Islāmic calendar, in which Muslims observe fasting

S

Sahābah: Muslims who met the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) believing in him and died believing in him.
Sahīh: authentic, the highest rank of classification of authentic *ahādīth*.
Salaf/Salafus-Sālihīn: pious predecessors; the Muslims of the first three generations: the Companions, the successors and their successors.
Salafi: one who ascribes oneself to the *salaf* and follows their way.
Sīrah: the life story of the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ).
Sharī'ah: the divine code of law of Islām.
Shawwāl: the month after *Ramadān*
Shaytān: S'Aṭān
Shī'ah: (see *Rāfidī*) a collective name for various sects claiming love for *Ahlul-Bayt*.
Shirk: associating partners with Allāh directly or indirectly; compromising any aspects of *Tawhīd*.
Sūrah: a chapter of the *Qur'ān*
Sunnah : "example, practice;" the way of life of the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), consisting of his words, actions and silent approvals. The *Sunnah* is contained in various *ahādīth*.

T

Tābi'ī: (pl. *tābi'īn*) the generation that came after the Companions of the Prophet (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).
Tafsīr: explanation of the *Qur'ān*.

Tāghūt: anything worshiped other than the real God (Allāh) (i.e. false deities).
Tahajjud: voluntary, recommended Prayer between the compulsory prayers of *'Ishā'* and *Fajr*.
Takhrīj: to reference a *hadīth* to its sources and analyze its *isnāds*.
Taqlīd: blind following; to follow someone's opinion (*madhhab*) without evidence.
Taqwā: acting in obedience to Allāh, hoping for His mercy upon light from Him and *taqwā* is leaving acts of disobedience, out of fear of Him, upon light from Him.
Tarjamah: notes about a reporter of *hadīth*.
Tawwāf: the circumambulation of the *Ka'bah*.
Tawhīd: Islāmic Monotheism. The Oneness of Allāh. Believing and acting upon His Lordship, His rights of Worship and Names and Attributes.

U

Uhud: A well-known mountain in al-Madīnah. One of the greatest battles in Islāmic history came at its foot. This is called *Ghazwah Uhud*.
'Ulamā': (singular: *'ālim*) scholars.
Umm: mother of, used as an identification.
Ummah [nation]: "nation", the Muslims as a whole.
'Umrah: a visit to Makkah during which one performs the *tawwāf* around the *Ka'bah* and the *Sa'ī* between *as-Safā* and *al-Marwah*. It is called the lesser *Hajj*.
Usūl: the fundamentals.



Wahyī: the revelation or inspiration of Allāh to His Prophets.
Wahdatul-Wujūd: the belief that everything in existence is infact Allāh. This deviant belief is held by many *Sūfīs*.
Wakīl: disposer of affairs.
Witr: "odd;" the last Prayer at the night, which consists of odd number of *raka'āt* (units).
Walīmah: the wedding feast.
Wasīlah: the means of approach or achieving His closeness to Allāh by getting His favours.
Wudū': an ablution (ritual washing) that is performed before Prayer and other kinds of worship.

Y

Yaqīn: perfect absolute faith.
Yathrib: one of the names of al-Madīnah.

Z

Zakāt: charity that is obligatory on everyone who has wealth over and above a certain limit over which a year has passed (2.5% of saved wealth).
Zakātul-Fitr: an obligatory charity by the Muslims to be given to the poor before the Prayer of *'Īdul-Fitr*.
Zamzam: the sacred water inside the *haram* (the grand mosque) at Makkah.
Zanādiqah: atheists, heretics.

Our Call to the Ummah

[1]: We believe in Allāh and His Names and Attributes, as they were mentioned in the Book of Allāh and in the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allāh (عَزَّوَجَلَّ), without *taḥrīf* (distortion), nor *ta'wīl* (figurative interpretation), nor *tamthīl* (making a likeness), nor *tashbīh* (resemblance), nor *ta'ṭīl* (denial).

[2]: We love the Companions (رَضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ) of the Messenger of Allaah (صَلَّىٰ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), and we hate those who speak against them. We believe that to speak ill of them is to speak ill of the Religion, because they are the ones who conveyed it to us. And we love the Family of the Prophet (صَلَّىٰ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) with love that is permitted by the *Sharī'ah*.

[3]: We love the People of *Ḥadīth* and all of the *Salaf* of the *Ummah* from *Ahl al-Sunnah*. Imām al-Shāṭibī (d.790H) - رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ - said, "The *Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ*, the Companions, the *tābi'īn* and their successors knew the *Qur'ān*, its sciences and its meanings the best."

[4]: We despise *'ilm al-kalām* (knowledge of theological rhetoric), and we view it to be from amongst the greatest reasons for the division in the *Ummah*.

[5]: We do not accept anything from the books of *fiqh* (jurisprudence), nor from the books of *tafsīr* (explanation of the *Qur'ān*), nor from the ancient stories, nor from the *Sīrah* (biography) of the Prophet (صَلَّىٰ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), except that which has been confirmed from Allāh or from His Messenger (صَلَّىٰ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). We do not mean that we have rejected them, nor do we claim that we are not in need of them. Rather, we benefit from the discoveries of our Scholars and the jurists and other than them. However, we do not accept a ruling, except with an authentic proof.

[6]: We do not write in our books, nor do we cover in our lessons, nor do we give sermons with anything except the *Qur'ān*, or the authentic and authoritative *ḥadīth*. And we detest what emanates from many books and admonishers in terms of false stories and weak and fabricated *aḥādīth*.

[7]: We do not perform *takfīr* upon any Muslim due to any sin, except *Shirk* with Allāh, or the abandonment of Prayer, or apostasy. We seek refuge in Allāh from that.

[8]: We believe that the *Qur'ān* is the Speech of Allāh, it is not created.

[9]: We hold that our 'obligation is to co-operate with the group that traverses the methodology of the Book and the *Sunnah*, and what the *Salaf* of the *Ummah* were upon; in terms of calling to Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ), and being sincere in worship of Him, and warning from *Shirk*, innovations, and disobedience, and to advise all of the groups that oppose this.' 'So co-operating upon righteousness and piety (*taqwā*) and mutual advising necessitates warning against evil and not co-operating with the wicked.'

[10]: We do not deem it correct to revolt against the Muslim rulers as long as they are Muslims, nor do we feel that revolutions bring about reconciliation. Rather, they corrupt the community.

[11]: We hold that this multiplicity of present day parties is a reason for the division of the Muslims and their weakness. So therefore we set about 'freeing the minds from the fetters of blind-following and the darkness of sectarianism and party spirit.'

[12]: We restrict our understanding of the Book of Allāh and of the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) to the understanding of the *Salaf* of the *Ummah* from the Scholars of *ḥadīth*, not the blind-

followers of their individuals. Rather, we take the truth from wherever it comes. And we know that there are those who claim *Salafīyah*, yet *Salafīyah* is free from them, since they bring to the society what Allāh has prohibited. We believe in 'cultivating the young generation upon this Islām, purified from all that we have mentioned, giving to them a correct Islamic education from the start - without any influence from the disbelieving western education.'

[13]: We believe that politics is a part of the Religion, and those who try to separate the Religion from politics are only attempting to destroy the Religion and to spread chaos.

[14]: We believe there will be no honor or victory for the Muslims until they return to the Book of Allāh and to the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

[15]: We oppose those who divide the Religion into trivialities and important issues. And we know that this is a destructive *Da'wah*.

[16]: We oppose those who put down the knowledge of the *Sunnah*, and say that this is not the time for it. Likewise, we oppose those who put down acting upon the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

[17]: Our *Da'wah* and our *'Aqīdah* is more beloved to us than our own selves, our wealth and our offspring. So we are not prepared to part with it for gold, nor silver. We say this so that no one may have hope in buying out our *Da'wah*, nor should he think that it is possible for him to purchase it from us for *dīnār* or *dirham*.

[18]: We love the present day Scholars of the *Sunnah* and hope to benefit from them and regret the passing away of many of them. Imām Mālik said (d.179H) - رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ, "The knowledge of *ḥadīth* is your

flesh and blood and you will be asked concerning it on the Day of Judgment, so look who you are taking it from."

[19]: We do not accept a *fatwā* except from the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allāh (صَلَّى ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

These are glimpses into our *'Aqīdah* and our *Da'wah*. So if one has any objection to this, then we are prepared to accept advice if it is truthful, and to refute it if it is erroneous, and to avoid it if it is stubborn rejection. And Allāh knows best.